

Vol 2. No. 8

Saturday, October 15, 1921

Issued Weekly

Price, 3d



HIS FIRST CRICKET MATCH

FIVE FACES ISLAND

HULLO!"

"What's that?"
"Do ye see it, Tom, boy? Over—port bow."

Tom Presdee stared intently through the fog. The skipper's long, wrinkled forehead directed his gaze.

All about the little ocean-going tug, as she nosed her way through the thick mist, was the tremendous and impressive silence of the night.

It seemed to Tom Presdee, as he stood in the darkness of the tiny wheel-house, that the fog had muffled and choked everything. There was no sound of any moving thing behind the almost solid grey curtains.

Even the lights on board were dimmed, and had been so for an hour or more, the engines were running slower and more silently than Tom had ever before noticed. The intermittent sounds—creaking of timbers, the wash of parted waters at the bows, or the uneasy stirring of a boat in the davits—did not interfere with the intense hush of the night. Tom's accustomed ears accepted these as part of the silence itself.

Skipper Flannagan, too, leaning over the bridge-rail and intent on the drifting wall in front, was unusually silent. It seemed as if he were painfully on the alert for anything that might happen. Tom had been watching his bent back and the attentive pose of his head for at least fifteen minutes. He knew that the skipper had not moved once during that time.

What did it all mean? Why this inexplicable and stealthy approach on an unknown coast, in dead of night, under cover of mist? Why had the noise of the vessel been hushed—why not the usual singing and banjo-playing, the lights and the shouted orders?

The absence of these things, a certain change of attitude on the part of the crew and officers, and something in the air itself combined to give Presdee an impression that there was something afoot. And something exciting, at that. Had he not seen, that very morning, an unused revolver cartridge lying on the open deck? And had not the skipper kicked it overboard with a muttered unsatisfactory explanation?

Tom wished with all his heart that he was old enough to be taken into the confidence of the skipper. This furtive creeping to land. Tom couldn't puzzle it all out clearly. There were lots of things he didn't understand—yet.

He was thinking of all these things as he followed with his eye the direction of Flannagan's forefinger.

"Yes, sir; a ship—steamer, isn't she? I see her now. What's on, sir? What ship's that?"

"It's she," said Flannagan softly. "The other crowd."

He said the indicator of the engine-room telegraph over to "stop!" The engines beat a moment longer, and then they muffled thus—thus—thus—ceased altogether. The silence became more oppressive than ever. Tom watched the indefinite blur of the other boat as it moved slowly to port, and listened to the sound of the working of her engines.

"Two points starboard," whispered

A Story of Stirring Adventure in the South Seas

By Andrew H. Walpole

Flannagan. "If they know we're here—it's all up. What rotten luck, running right into the brutes! Thank providence for this mist, though. Another two, Tommy, me boy."

The dimly-seen steamer seemed to be standing still. For what was seeming by an age, she remained in the same position.

"If we can see her," said Tom, "then to one they can see us too. If only this fog was a bit souper, we'd dodge them. I believe."



A Painful Test

Father: "How do you know when you have had enough?"

Willie: "I always eat till I get a pain and then I eat one more to make certain."

"We'll dodge them yet."

Barely were the words out of his mouth when from below somewhere, very abruptly and with no warning, a door slammed. Flannagan jumped and muttered, beneath his breath,

"Stabbed—hard down!" he rapped out, rushing over the indicator, so that the engines took up their work again at full speed. "Wasn't that enough to rouse every man aboard Ah! Hear that?"

A hall rang across the intervening water, and was repeated after a brief interval. Again it sounded, two voices in chorus.

The steady beat of the tug Skyrrocket's engines was the only response.

"Breakers to starboard, sir."

Flannagan listened hard.

"By th' powers, ye're right, sonny. Here, gimme the wheel. Duck down

and rouse Mr Webster. Quick! Bring him here."

Just as Tom hurried below a bright, exposing glare shot out from the loom of the steamer stern, swept round, and fell on the Skyrrocket, left her for a moment, and returned briskly, to stay there, throwing everything on board into an uneasy light. It was a searchlight from the other craft. Across the funnel of light there drifted the steamy vapor of the fog, sliding and swirling.

Flannagan shouted. There was some stir in the stern of the Skyrrocket as the black figures of two or three men grew busy about some erection there. Presently Presdee and Mr Webster appeared on the bridge. Webster, who had chartered the tug at Garutu, was a quiet, reserved man of middle age, and Tom felt sure now that he was the leading spirit in this mysterious adventure. He turned and shook his fist in the eye of the searchlight.

"Well, they've found us," he said simply.

Presdee resumed his post at the wheel just as a subdued flap was heard from the direction of the other craft, and a shell, flying high, whistled over his head and splashed into the sea ahead of the tug. His heart beat furiously. Gunned! Another explosion and a fountain of water leaped up to port, subsiding in a scatter of spray.

"Let them shoot," said Flannagan hardily. He had scarcely spoken before a third shot found a mark in the tug's stern-rail. A shower of splintered debris glittered white in the glare.

"Getting better," commented Webster dryly. "Why not get out their light?"

"Dot their eye, Jackson," shouted Flannagan. The three on the bridge waited breathlessly. Suddenly from the mysterious erection in the stern there sounded a violent explosion; a puff of smoke rushed up into the stars; the searchlight went out like the closing of a giant eye.

"First shot," said the skipper. Presdee was amazed. So there was a gun aboard! There was something magical in that fact. He knew that there had been no sign of a gun or mounting there before, and yet—a gun had certainly been aboard.

"Breakers again, skipper," he said.

"I hear them. And—bad luck!—I see 'em, too. Round with her to port, Tommy. So!" He moved the telegraph lever again, and the vessel's pace slowed to a crawl.

To starboard Tom could see a frothing line of snowy spray that indicated the rocks so narrowly missed. There was a brief skimming in shallow water, but Webster, who evidently knew to a hair where they were, was directing Flannagan now, and presently the Skyrrocket was riding the sea as deep as the like gorges, with the land looming darkly on either side.

They swept under a tree; the leaves rustled against their foremast. Noising their way carefully, they went deeper and deeper into the gloom. Finally they came to a stop, and by the light of a lantern, the tug was made fast to the bank of a river. Tom observed that trees bent overhanging in all directions, Flannagan and Webster were talking earnestly at the other end of the bridge. Where were they? What was going to happen? Tom could not

make anything of the events of the night.

II.

The upshot of the conversation between Webster and Flannagan was that they both went ashore, and returned in a few minutes to fetch Tom himself.

"You're a trustworthy lad," said Flannagan, "and we'll let you into this secret. Mr Webster here is the rightful owner of this island, his father having bought it from the Jap. Government some years ago. A couple of weeks back he comes to visit the place for the first time in his little pinnaque, and while going over the joint he discovers"—he lowered his voice and whispered in Tom's ear—"diamonds!"

"That's so," said Webster, taking up the tale. "You see, boy, there's an extinct volcano on this island, and the pipes and tubes leading from underground to the crater are chock full of mud—blue mud, like that at Kimberley. Now, I've been to South Africa myself, and as soon as I saw that mud I thought of diamonds. Just the same as the muck in the diamond-holes, it was."

He paused and looked up into the darkness in the direction of the volcano of which he spoke. "Well, I fogged around, and found a few small stones almost right away! It was good enough for me. I got the pinnaque back to Gavutu as quickly as I could. Why, I had a regular fortune in my hand, properly worked. I made arrangements to get some reliable men from Sydney, and wired my two nephews to come across. And then my man Gault betrayed me.

"Yes. He was missing one day, and on enquiry in Gavutu I found that he'd cleared out with some of the worst rif-raff in the place. Also, the steamer Sandboy, commanded by Captain Murrell, a notorious scoundrel, had sailed early in the morning, heading east. I put two and two together, and felt sure that Gault and Murrell were off to Five Faces Island—that's this place. You know the rest. That was the Sandboy we ran from just now."

"We're going up to reconnoitre, Tom," said Flannagan. He thrust a pistol into Tom's palm. "Here, take this, but be mighty careful with it. Don't let off unless you've just got to. Compre?"

Tom nodded, his heart thumping beneath his buttoned reefer jacket. He placed the pistol in his hip pocket and followed Flannagan and Webster up the steep, hilly path.

It was not long before they arrived at the volcano-top. Crouched in the shelter of the massive chunks of rock and lava, they peered down into the crater. Webster spoke in a husky whisper.

"Where! Lights!" he said.

It was true. A couple of oil lamps glimmered at the bottom of the huge, cup-shaped hollow, and they could see the dim figure of a man in the mist winding at a window.

"That's all right, then," said Flannagan, in the tone of one who has satisfied himself. "They're excavating the mud as hard as they can life—going at it night and day. I'll bet."

"Well, what now?" asked Webster, looking to the skipper for guidance.

"No more now till daylight," answered Flannagan. "We'll get a move on tomorrow."

Back again they went to the Sky-rocket, lying concealed in the deep tidal creek, there to think out the best means of ousting the intruders.

In the morning Tom was about bright and early, and by walking a little way inland he could see, over a shoulder-like peninsula, the steamer that had fired on them the night before. She was a rusty-sided tramp, anchored close inshore, and two boats were constantly passing between her and the land. By turning at right angles he observed the peak of the extinct volcano. Its structure was rather peculiar. The rim was deeply indented at parts, and left five peaks remaining, so that the whole thing looked like a crown.

"You see those five spikes?" asked Webster, coming up behind the lad as he stood gazing. "That inspired the name—Five Faces Island—when you're close up those things look like five faces, staring into the volcano. Curious, isn't it? But now, what are those boats doing?"

He lifted a pair of marine glasses and studied the boats attentively.

"By heck," he exclaimed, "they're carrying bottled after bottled of the clay to the Sandboy. They must have made a dump of it on the beach. We must put a stop to that game. Where's Flannagan?"

"Here's Flannagan," answered that worthy, appearing from the bushes, his red beard shining in the morning sun. He studied the movements of the enemy with pursed lips.

"How long have they been here already, d'ye think? A week? Why,



Jackson's lips were compressed tightly, and his next shot got the steamer amidships.

man, they'll have shifted tons to the beach in that time! They've dug out the prize part of the deposit, I'll guarantee. We'll have to give them the rifle and stop that ferrying."

A short excursion to the crater revealed the fact that Gault's men had ceased their quarrying operations.

The difficulty about advancing some men to within rifle reach of the boats was that the beach was starmounted by a barren rim, and it was necessary to pass this in order to aim with any chance of hitting. Was this rim guardable? That was a thing Flannagan desired greatly to know.

"If for going across," he announced about midday. "Anyone coming with me?"

He picked up a rifle and looked round at his men. They had been promised big pay for their part in the business in hand, but they were inclined to balk at running risk of being shot down.

Tom Presdee, seeing their hesitation, stepped forward.

"Want me," he said.

"If we get across all right, you others follow," said Flannagan, and the two of them emerged into the bare stony ridge. Five paces, six paces, seven paces, they went in safety—and then—whit-thump!—a bullet whined past Tom's ear. A thread of smoke curled upwards from the rim of the bay. Then bang-bang!—a double report rang out, and splinters of rock scattered about Flannagan's feet.

"Bad luck," said Flannagan coolly, and retreated. "We'd be posted before we got half-way over."

From the position near the creek the boats could still be observed at their portage.

"What a pity," said Flannagan, "we can't get them from here. Too far, of course. Hold hard—what about the gun?"

"Shall them, you mean?"

"There's no other way of getting at the brutes, unless we haul out the old Skyrocket, and in that case we'd be blown out of the water. They've got heavy metal, and I can see at least two guns from here, through the glasses. Oh! Gault and Murrell made a certainty of the job, didn't they just?"

By dusk the gun from the stern of the tug had been mounted on a hastily-constructed emplacement that commanded, from some distance, the whole of the beach.

"Let them have it," said Flannagan. Jackson, who had once been a Navy man, squinted along the sights and fired.

The shot kicked up the water between the two boats, and through the glasses could be seen a small white confusion on the part of the crests. Another shot. The boats made hastily for the parent steamer.

"By glory, they're getting under way," said Webster, excitedly.

"Quickly, there, can't you wing them?" Jackson's lips were compressed tightly, and his next shot got the steamer amidships. But the raiders were already on the move. The rusty-aided tramp had turned stern-on to the gun, and was drawing rapidly away. Already the distance was extensive, and the growling darkness rendered accurate aim most difficult.

Specks of water flashed dull white about the tramp, but she did not appear to have been hit. Again, she was replying, too, with her best shot found a mark. Sparks and a spout of flame followed the explosion of the shell, and for a moment they expected the steamer to slow down and stop.

To their intense disappointment,

however, she grew smaller and smaller, and the tropic darkness abruptly replaced the brief half-light of a moment before.

"Done us!" cried Flannagan. On arrival at the beach they discovered that very little of the dump of mud now remained. The robbers had taken away a cargo of tons and tons of the precious clay, and it was only necessary for them to reach some deserted land to examine it in privacy and at their leisure. Gault and Murrell had probably made their fortunes.

These were the bitter thoughts of Presdee as he came to the Five Faces crater in a melancholy mood. The main pipe had been cleaned out for a considerable distance, and he could only hope that in the mud that remained there would be sufficient of the precious stones to repay him his efforts.

On the following morning Tom Presdee, mounting the hill toward the crater, happened to glance seaward, and the sight that met his eyes took his breath away.

Perfectly motionless, not half a mile on the further side of the peninsula, the Sandboy lay apparently at anchor.



Tommy's Temptation

Old Gentleman: "Well, my boy, and when is your birthday?"

Tommy (who has been warned against fishing for presents): "Oh! It's a long way off—a year the day after tomorrow."

"They're not much afraid of us, anyway," thought Tom. "But why on earth haven't they showed off by now? What's the use of waiting? Why, I believe, they're here, and I should have started keenly at the tramp steamer. He uttered a howl of joy.

"She's around!" There was no mistaking it. To Tom's trained eye there was a slight list, an unnatural scummen, they told their own tale. Farciously he ran down the slope, and communicated with his skipper. The Sandboy was examined through the glass again, and Webster expressed the opinion that there was no one aboard.

The vessel was certainly unusually silent. Look as they would, the party on shore could make out no movement on her decks. Further examination showed something still more startling. She was smoking—smoking from more places than one.

"She's on fire," said Flannagan emphatically. "I can see it all clearly now. When they ran on the reef cut there, and couldn't get her off, they took to the boats and got away. But before they left they set her alight!"

"Well, and she's crammed full of diamond-muck!" cried Webster in

great excitement. "Her cargo's possibly worth thousands. We mustn't let her burn out there—can't there a chance of putting the fire out?"

Flannagan shook his head. "We've nothing to do it with. Webster, if I but could have a shot at towing her off and bringing her into the beach."

And presently the Skyrocket was steaming out towards the tramp steamer, over whose decks the smoke was now rolling in heavy clouds. She was obviously doomed.

Young Tom scrambled aboard the fire-gripped Sandboy, and a stout hawser was passed over to the gallant little tug. The Skyrocket set out sturdily towards the beach; the tow-ropes fastened, twanged, and tugs, amid a cheer from those on the tug's decks, the tramp scraped painfully off the reef and into deep water.

But now she was blazing furiously, and the distance to the beach seemed great. Could they run her aground before she broke up and sank? Progress was painfully slow, and Webster could hardly bear to look as he saw the priceless cargo in peril. They all watched the tramp anxiously. Flames were leaping mast-high, and clouds of steam surrounded her as she came majestically forward.

The tug, when she had come as near to the beach as she dared, cast off, and the Sandboy was left to follow on her own momentum. At a decreasing pace she sailed for the beach. The mill breakers caught her and swung her forward. She went on, destined to have reached the beach, and to be climbing the dry land, and then, with a crunch they could hear all over the bay, went around.

Wild cheers went up from the tug's decks as the furiously blazing steamer halted, halted, and toppled over in an immense cloud of steam. The diamond-clay was safe!

All that remains to be told is that the owner of Five Faces Island recalled a handsome fortune out of his diamond-bearing volcano, and sold out to a mining company at an eminently satisfactory figure. But the strange part was that the largest and most valuable stones were found in the clay recovered from the wreck of the Sandboy. Gault and Murrell missed being a millionaire by a hair's breadth.

And finally, you may be sure that the skipper of the Skyrocket, Tom Presdee, and the crew, did not go unrewarded. Webster was a grateful man, and he knew how to show his gratitude in a highly practical fashion.

Correspondence Invited

The following desire to correspond with other members of the Club:

F. Bate, Calgary, Vir., with boys 11 or 14 years old interested in photography. . . . M. Bordin, 30 Ash-vendor st., Annapolis, Spyn, with boys 11 years of age, interested in foreign coins. . . . U. Travers, Lancaster, Vir., with a pal about 12 years of age. . . . W. L. Cowan, Bureau via Gloucester, Grand, with interest in photography who would like to form a club. . . . J. R. Thompson, 42 Oregon road, Blatnawick, Vir., with sons about 12 or 13 years of age outside Australia. . . . May Thompson, 42 Oregon road, Blatnawick, Vir., with sons about 16 years of age outside Australia. . . . W. B. Thompson, 42 Oregon road, Blatnawick, P.O. Vir., with sons about 14 years of age. . . . J. B. Anderson, 42 Oregon road, Blatnawick, Vir., with sons interested in stamps. . . . Jack B. Anderson, "Arden," Glendale st., 8th, Berkeley, with any pal. . . . Clifford Harris, Berkeley, Berkeley, South Perth, with boys. . . . A. B. Anderson, 42 Moulton st., Albert Park, Vir., with three American boys, whose addresses he would be glad to receive.

Boy Scouts

"Falx" is the Official Organ of the Australian Boy Scouts' Association (Victorian Branch)

By "Lone Wolf"

Despatch Running

In the early days of scouting in Australia, despatch running was a favorite pastime with all Troops. Sometimes two or more districts would combine and have a patrol carrying a despatch through an area guarded by two or three hundred other Scouts.

In one run, which I remember very clearly, four of us, all First Class Scouts, had to get a despatch conveyed three miles through more than four hundred hostile Scouts. Three runners got through. The fourth Scout then deliberately showed himself and raised a row in order that the others might get out of a nasty spot where the cunningly placed "enemy" had arranged a trap for us.

Despatch running calls for the highest Scout efficiency to carry it through successfully, and those who have not tried a run for some time will find the trial well worth while again. Runners must be in good condition, as the going is always hard. Observation powers must be well trained, so that no indication of enemy presence may be missed.

The greatest care is necessary in taking cover. Select your back ground to suit your uniform. It is useless for a khaki-tinted Scout, for example, to think that he can escape observation against a patch of green grass. In running, a Scout is liable to lose his direction unless he is continually on the alert, as he must do a lot of dodging from cover to cover. This difficulty can be overcome if you carry a watch that keeps fairly good time. Point the twelve at the sun, and half-way between twelve and the hour-hand will give you "direct north."

When carrying a written despatch, which you will generally do in practice, a Scout must carefully hide his despatch so that in case of capture the enemy will not be able to find the message.

I have used several hiding places. These included a slit cut in the edge of my hat brim, a slit in the tongue of a shoe, a hollow cotton boot lace, a very small but deep hole in my staff end (around end), in which I used to hide the despatch, and plug the hole with a pill rolled out of breadcrumbs. That place was never discovered.

A member of my Patrol had the heel of one shoe fixed on with screws and a small hole in the centre of the heel was used to hold his despatch. Many a smile was caused when this Scout answered his heel to deliver the message after a successful run.

To escape observation, travel fast over open ground. If you must cross it, and go very slowly in cover, because in cover the other fellow will be waiting for you. Keep down in the bottom of hollows, otherwise you show up against the sky to anyone who may be in the hollow. Avoid climbing trees. They sway and quiver so that they can be noticed a long way off. Watch trees carefully for signs of the enemy. Be careful not to disturb cattle or birds, as their alarmed movements will show your presence to watchers.

Lastly, if you think you are discovered, and it seems that the game

is up, DO NOT MOVE. Let the other Scouts come to you.

I was jammed once in the centre of a prickly bush in the middle of a drove of unfriendly Scouts who were searching for me. One of them came up to my bush, which was in a dark shadow under tea-trees, poked his staff in and actually brushed my arm with it, but did not discover the perspiring Scout hidden in that bush. One move and I should have had to acknowledge defeat. By keeping still I outwitted the searchers.



Slit here for Despatch



Hole for Despatch

Heel that screws on and off shoe



Shaded portion shows where Despatch can be wrapped to be hidden

Scouts' Corroboroo

Scouts and Cubs, don't forget the Scouts' Corroboroo in January. Scouts from all over Australia will gather in Sydney, where the Corroborees take place.

This Corroboroo of Australian Scouts marks the beginning of new and better times for the movement in this country.

It will offer a fine opportunity of making the Boys' Brotherhood stronger in Australia. Don't miss it. It is worth making a great effort to attend the gathering.

Some day your State will hold the annual Corroboroo. Just as you will then appreciate consideration from visiting Scouts in giving your State full particulars of the numbers attending, so you should oblige on this occasion by furnishing the desired particulars without delay.

There are not many more weeks left before Corroboroo Day, so preparations must not be delayed or disappointment will be the result.

Many Patrols and Troops have already begun preparation. Be sure that you also begin in time. Get particulars from the leaders at your own headquarters. They will help you willingly. If you leave arrangements till the last days you make things

difficult for yourselves, your headquarters, and the organizer of the Corroboree.

Don't forget that there is an interstate competition among Patrols of nine each for the E. Trenchard Mifflin challenge shield, which is a valuable trophy, and the Patrol winning it will be entitled to call itself "Lord Forster's Own."

This competition will be held at the Corroboree each year. Particulars as to entry forms and conditions can be obtained from your own State headquarters. Get going as early as possible.

Each State is required to hold preliminary trials to pick its representatives for the actual competition, so that there is now no time to spare. If you don't begin now you will be too late to do much good.



The Kangaroo Hunt

Cubs, here is another good game for you. It is good acroting practice, too, because it is similar to the stalking done by our Australian natives, who are the best stalkers in the world.

The natives always kept a sharp look-out until they discovered a "roo" feeding. Then Mr. Blackfellow would scout round it until he reached the side away from the wind, so that the "roo" could not scent him or hear him easily.

Kangaroos are too clever to feed among thick scrub, where their enemies could get up close to them without being seen. They eat in the open among long grass, with a few odd bushes, and keep popping their heads up every now and again to have a look round.

The native has to do some good scouting to beat the "roo", and this is how he goes about it. First, he takes the bushes and branches all round him from the waist up, so that at a distance, when he keeps still, he looks like a small tree. Then he grips his spears with his big toe, and when the "roo" puts its head down to feed he moves quietly forward standing still each time the animal's head is up. So the game goes on until he gets close enough to be sure that his spears will not miss.

Cubs can practice this method of stalking by having Jacks or a "Fiver" acting as the "roo". All the others spread around in a circle and represent bushes.

The "roo" must act the part, looking round and spotting Cubs, anyone spotted having to stand still where they are until the game is finished.

Most Cubs get spotted because they move while the "roo" is looking in their direction. When he looks your way you must stay still, not even breathing if you can help it.

If everyone is spotted, the Cub closest in wins, and his six gets a mark. If some Cubs are not spotted when the time is up, the closest in Cub who has not been seen gets one mark, and if he is nearer than all the spotted ones, and still has not been discovered, his six receives two more marks.



MANY years ago three of the hardest-working young men in Australia were running a gold mine in Queensland, right away in the middle of the steep, rocky Leycester country.

One of these was Sandy Cleave, a brilliant mining engineer, another "Clipper" Beaforth, just out from the old country, but capable and alert. I was the third, and the youngest, and I remember that I wearied of the life after a few years in the solitude.

It was only to be expected. The eternal clattering roar of the stamp-mill, the whirr of machinery, the tireless jabbering stupidity of the kookas, and all the sights and sounds of the gold mine had grown terribly monotonous to me. You see, I had been chained down for more than three years to this remote spot, far from even the partial civilisation that a township might offer. You can easily understand that I began to tire of the life, to become a little homesick. So, too, I suppose, did Sandy and Clipper, my partners. I expect that they wanted to leave quite as badly as I did. But it seemed to me just then that they thought of nothing but the gold specks in the ore that came to our mill. The three of us toiled, labored and sweated at the vast masses of rock until we were almost worn out. We worked our kookas as hard as we were allowed to. The little heap of ingots in the storeroom grew month by month.

There was a reason for our furious efforts. We had made arrangements to sell out in a few months, and the larger yield we could show, the larger price the mine would command. Mr. Jamieson, our prospective purchaser, was to arrive from New Zealand in the following February. The thought of selling out and getting into a big city business, of course, buoyed us up tremendously. But, after all, the life was a hard, lonely one, especially for a boy like myself, for I was just eighteen.

One day, I determined to take the whole day off. Sandy and Clipper were glad when I mentioned a holiday, and they said that it would do me good. So I snuggled up before daybreak the next morning, and rode down into the wooded foothills below the mine.

It was a very hot day, and, though I was some distance from the mine before the sun rose, the weather was far too warm by noon for further exertion. I tethered my horse, sat down in the shade, ate my frugal lunch, and lay idly there for a couple of hours, enjoying a doze.

Later in the afternoon I set out in search of some game. I had promised my partners a tasty supper that night, and I did not intend that they should be disappointed. Leaving my horse tethered where he was, in easy reach of some grass, I filled my pockets with cartridges and set out. For some time

I tramped steadily through the bush, without seeing anything worth spending a bullet on.

I was beginning to think that there was nothing doing; I had, in fact, turned back towards the horse, when I caught sight of a couple of brush turkeys scratching on a sandy patch of soil some ninety yards away.

At once I determined to have them. Dropping to the ground, I began to wriggle closer, under cover of the tall grass, advancing as rapidly as I could on hands and knees without disturbing the birds. As I had no shot-gun, only a pea-rifle, I had to make tolerably sure of my shot. Slowly and anxiously I drew nearer, until, at length, I judged that I could blow the head off the nearer bird. I lifted my weapon, and gazed eagerly down the sights. It was a beautiful shot. My finger began to squeeze the trigger.

And then, just an instant before the cartridge was timed to explode, they lifted their heads, glanced sharply aside, and, greatly to my chagrin, scuttled with a lightning dart into the undergrowth.

I gave a groan of disappointment. "Messed them! Clumsy idiot!" I lowered my rifle in disgust.

But in that moment I saw that it was not I, after all, who had scared the birds. They had not seen me. Instead, they had seen or heard another fellow—a tall, slouching man in a felt hat and wrinkled, dusty riding boots. He did not notice me, for I still lay there in the long grass; but I saw him, and didn't like the look of him, either.

He was heavily built and ugly—

Tennis at Public Schools

Although lawn tennis is played at all our public schools, it is not regarded as being on the same high plane as are cricket, football, or rowing. It is contended in many quarters, that tennis does not encourage team work, and is, therefore, not of the same value for schools as are the pastimes named. This feeling has been handed down as a tradition from the public schools of England, where it was considered that tennis had a tendency to make a boy selfish instead of encouraging him to lose all sense of self in playing for his side.

Writing on this subject in "All Sports Weigh In," T. T. Barry, the well-known umpire and lawn tennis expert, says that a change of attitude on the part of the English public schools is taking place.

"I am very glad to hear," he writes, "that many public schools are now fostering lawn tennis, and consider there ought to be as much spirit de corps in a boy playing for his six in tennis as for his cricket eleven. Besides, many boys have a natural aptitude for lawn tennis who would never become good cricketers. Further, there is plenty of scope for both games."

ugly because of a deep scar, the mark of an old wound, which drew down the corner of his mouth in a permanent snarl.

As if he had seen me out of the tail of his eye, he suddenly turned, and came marching up the slope of the eminence where I lay hidden.

"Jiminy!" thought I, "he'll walk clean over me!"

What could I do? To start up under his feet with rifle in hand, would give him the idea that I was up to no good. On the other hand, what a pretty fool he would think me, seeing me lying face down in the grass! Either way, it was a bit of a dilemma.

He solved it himself by sitting half-way up the incline and hitting down on a rock. He took out an old gun-metal watch, shook it, and consulted it, his back still turned. Then, with aggravating slowness, he produced a grimy handkerchief, removed his hat, and began to wipe his face.

The slow ease of all this annoyed me. I was anxious for him to move off. You can have no idea of the indignity of lying there in the grass under the blazing sun. Presently I tried to wriggle back by the way I had come, and make myself a fool for not going when the fellow first arrived. He turned his head and looked around. I lay quite still.

After ten minutes I resigned myself to my fate. I had to remain there until he left.

The time passed, and soon I heard the hum of voices from below. Somebody else must have joined him without my knowledge. Cautionally lifting my head, I observed, to my utter surprise, that he was talking with Black Jack Roberts.

Black Jack, as thorough going a scoundrel as any in Australia, had been one of our own while overseas, but, detected at stealing, he had been thrown off the premises. That had been months before, and I thought that he had, in the meantime, returned to town. Under the circumstances, I felt a strong impulse to hear what was being said. I stole quietly within earshot. The stranger was too much taken up with the conversation to hear the slight sounds of my approach.

They were talking in low tones, and most of the speech was lost by the distance, for I dared not creep closer.

But quite distinctly I caught the separate words "gold" and "mine"—and that was enough to interest me in what was following. "I've got a strong feeling," said the fellow yet . . . only three . . . quite safe . . . too late," came the words, floating up on the still air of the summer afternoon. A shiver ran through me, and for a moment I lay there hot and sick as an infant. Black Jack, disguised and embittered, was betraying our little horde! I could hold back no longer. Danger or no danger, it was imperative that I should hear the remainder.

Instantly, as soon as I had drawn as close as safety warranted, the next words proved that my suspicions were well-founded. Minotto, the stran-

ger, was evidently the leader in a conspiracy to rob us of our precious metal. Black Jack, partly out of revenge, partly out of greed, had instigated the raid. From their words, I surmised that they had a number of followers—how many, I did not know. Unfortunately, they made no mention of the time of the projected attack.

That was as much as I managed to

hear. The two arose and, through a pair of field-glasses, examined our mine, visible on the mountain-side. Shortly afterwards they separated and left. For my part, I leaped up and ran furiously for my horse.

II.

We stood together in the black shadow of the big doorway. Clipper and I, scanning the valley below the

mine. It was the day following my lucky discovery of the plot that was being engineered against us; and we did not know when to expect the enemy.

Clipper had declared that he had seen a man dodging about in the bushes. I came to examine the clump of prickly-pear where the movement had been noticed, but I could see no sign. Clipper himself was convinced that we were being watched.

"I suppose, if we look close enough, we could spot them all," he said. "Black Jack has surely got someone overlooking our movements. Ready, Sandy?"

Sandy, strapping up a lean but very weighty gold ingot in a blanket, turned a smiling gaze upwards.

"Not quite," he answered. "In a minute, though—there! That finishes it." He held up an innocent-looking saw for our inspection. "But, they're very heavy blankets," he continued, grinning.

Clipper laughed shortly.

"Weighty, no doubt," he agreed; "but not half as heavy as the third Minotto will come when he arrives to find us and the bullion gone."

When I had acquainted my partners with the facts of what I had overheard, Sandy had evolved one of his usual bright schemes. He had suggested that we should cast all the gold we had into three ingots, wrap a blanket or two about them, and announce to the kanakas that we were leaving for a two-days' hunting trip.

In reality our intention was to risk a passage by boat down the treacher-



The canoe shot ahead like a hound loosed from the leash.

ous Lyeaster River, and to escape from the place.

Accordingly we paid off our employees, told them to take two days' leave of absence, and locked the store-room, setting three armed men to guard it until we returned. Very solemnly we bolted and barred an empty room and enjoined strict vigilance on the part of the sentries.

"Nobody," we told them, "is to come near the place. If anybody attempts to break in, shoot at once."

"Yes, yes."

"Don't hesitate. No matter who it is. The gold must be looked after—savvy?"

"We shall lay down our lives," said the half-dozen foremen solemnly.

"Lay down their arms, he means," said Clipper afterwards. "As if we'd trust all that metal to them! Doesn't it make you smile?"

We intended to leave the river about fifteen miles down, and set out for the township, from which the coach would carry one of us. Thus the gold would be taken to the train. The other two, we decided, would return to the mine with the mounted police.

We marched out in line style, with blankets swinging (although mine seemed to wretch about a ton and a half, and nearly broke my back), and in apparent high spirits, with all the appearance of a party of boys out on their first trip.

Long before we arrived at the river, however, all the jauntiness had gone from our walk; and our relief was great when, aching and perspiring, we deposited the precious bundles in the bottom of our big canoe. When we had laid the ballast to our satisfaction, we strapped each one and pushed out from the bank. The canoe was of rough design and workmanship, but very seaworthy and water-tight.

Sandy, holding the long steering-paddle fixed in its appointed socket, sat upright in the stern, while Clipper and I had an oar each, and, for about a mile and a half all went smoothly. The river flowed swiftly and quietly in a deep stream.

After that distance, however, broadening out, it coursed between the two cliff-walls of a great gorge, beset with fallen boulders; it grew shallower and swifter, whirling and foaming along, a veritable death-trap to any vessel venturing on the rapids.

Sandy made everything ready for the coming struggle.

"Dick," he said, "you're a trifle to the left. It'll make a difference, you know. And you, Clip, a bit deeper with your paddle. He's passing you round."

We attended to these deficiencies, and, in a few seconds, we felt the drag of the current upon the canoe. The first rock loomed up, a fringe of foam about its foot. We slipped and slid with the speed of a motor car, swifter and swifter we went, with a great wave rushing from our bows, and the spray-drift whipping our faces.

"Oars in!"

Sandy's voice came to us above the roar of the water and the hissing spray of the running tide against the rocks; and the blades, coated with white froth, were drawn inboard.

The speed increased. Sitting as trim and tight as we could, Clipper and I gazed intently ahead. No feet were visible through the thick-fanged rocks, seemed to leap at us from the water, seeking to rip our boat from stem to stern, like wet blotting-paper. In that seething turmoil she seemed pitifully frail.

Time after time, in what appeared to be incredible numbers, rocks would shoot past, with all the foam of the current creaming about their

waterlines; at times it seemed that we were perfectly motionless, with the whole river, rocks, cliffs and all, rushing past us. Sandy's steering was a thing past all praise. To Clipper and me, sitting huddled in our places, Sandy's rushing and swaying in the accuracy with which he directed our course through the bewildering maze of rocks.

A dozen times I cried out, to see us rushing to what seemed certain destruction; and a dozen times Sandy turned his rushing speed into some wonderful paddle-play. We had traversed, without mishap, perhaps half the length of the rapids, and were nearing the safer half when Clipper, glancing up and along the grim, bordering cliffs, let out a startled yell that rang loud above the whiter of the waters.

"Look!" he cried.

He flung out a pointing finger; and Sandy and I, following it with our eyes, made out the cause of his dismay. At this point the river was bridged with one of those daisy rope-and-plank bridges that are so common in mountainous districts. Although it seemed to us, at that distance, no larger than a piece of string stretched across the gap, we could see that it was dotted with the figures of men.

Such a cluster, in a sparsely-inhabited place, could mean only one thing. There was no need for words. We gazed at one another with horrified eyes. It was manifest that this was Minotto's gang, and equally manifest that they did not mean to let us pass the bridge alive. There was no mistaking the hostile nature of their preparations.

We could see them adjusting huge stones, that might be hurled on us from above. They would smash us to atoms if they landed. And, although the whole party speedily vanished, we knew very well that, if they were armed, they were about arranging to fire on us as we passed beneath the bridge.

I cannot say even now how Minotto had got wind of our deception. It is possible that one of Black Jack's spies, suspecting something of the trick that was being played, had mounted a false alarm and arranged for our destruction at the bridge. It may have been that one of our own kanakas, observing our preparation of the ingots, had turned traitor. Or the encounter may have been sheer coincidence.

At all events, Minotto knew.

At this point the river narrowed considerably, which, of course, made it the most suitable spot for a bridge; and it was no difficult matter to throw down rocks so that no part of the river below should be safe. There seemed no escape from our awful position.

Sandy himself, even cool old Sandy, went very white. His lips tightened in a way that showed that he meant to struggle against the disaster. He snatched out quick orders.

"Try to beat the question," he shouted.

With a marvellously neat turn, the head of the canoe was swung round and directed full in the eye of the current. But from the very first the attempt was impossible. Even with our utmost efforts we could only hold our heads with the current; to make headway against that powerful pull was out of the question.

"It's no good," almost sobbed Clipper. "Can't do it."

We strained and sweated, but to no purpose. Sandy's voice rose to a yell:

"The hell will you men for the sake of the stream! All out, boys! And may Providence be with us!"

Once more we whirled round like a cork in a gutter, and began to paddle with all our strength. The canoe shot ahead like a horse and loaded with our weight. We had been travelling quickly before; now we charged along in an impetuous rush, an immense wave

curling back from our outwater. We shot down upon the bridge with the startling rapidity of a lightning-flash.

Clipper and I, paddling like men demented, had no eyes for the men above. Sandy, too, was absorbed in swerving from rocks that nearly to confuse the marksmen, partly to avoid the rocks of the river-bed. Before we knew it we were under the bridge.

With a terrific splash, and a positive whoop, the first boulder sang downwards, and we were swept-up at our bows. We felt the water tremble at the impulse of this body of swirling water; our bows canted sharply upwards, so that we shipped a quantity of the boiling flood at our stern; and then, with a quick swing to port, we were once more upon the surface of the river proper. Two additional rocks described great parabolas in the air, seemed to hang poised, and then dived furiously into the hissing water.

The whole thing was as quick and unrelaxing as a cinematograph picture. Sandy's steering was so accurate that had but one of their bullets struck tightly to the steering paddle, and sent us pitching and wobbling aside to avoid a fourth boulder. The whole thing was over in a flash. One moment, we were under the bridge; the next, we were above it.

Somehow or other, due perhaps to the speed of the canoe or the depression necessary in aiming their firearms, the would-be robbers had succeeded in placing only one bullet—the one that struck Sandy. We could scarcely credit it, but he was almost unharmed, unharmed through the terrible ordeal.

And then, by a trick of fickle fate, just as we had left all the real dangers behind, just as we were beginning mutual congratulations, Sandy turned suddenly white, gave a gasp, and fell back against the stern.

For a moment or two he hung there, his legs crooked over the gunwale, his body drazing in the river—and then, as I lumped up in alarm to seize him, the canoe gave a lurch, overbalanced, and threw us all in the river.

My first thought, as I came to the surface with my mouth full of muddy water, was to find Sandy. He had disappeared. Shortly, however, the top of his head, with its familiar red hair, showed up a few yards off. In a few swift strokes I swam to him and caught him by the collar. The water, at that point, was well up to our chests, and it was a matter of some difficulty for the two of us to drag Sandy to the shelter of a rock. Finally, dripping and panting, we got ashore.

We had seen the canoe, keel upwards, floating merrily away downstream.

Of the ingots and blankets we saw nothing. They had unquestionably been thrown out when the canoe first capsized, and their weight must have taken them straight to the bottom. It was practically certain, too, that they had been rolled by the stream some distance from the scene of the accident.

Their loss was a terrible disappointment to us all. When we returned with the police we found that the projected raid had not taken place. Minotto must, after all, have got the wind up at the last moment.

After a day of hard searching we recovered our ingot, badly battered and cut, some four miles from the bridge. There was no trace of the others.

Still, as we were able to sell out a little later at a rather decent figure, enabling us to leave the inhospitable Lyeaster coast and all, and as Sandy is as sound as ever today, Fortune has not served us too hardly, after all.



Big Winner

Waiter (speaking down tube): Wild duck, one!

Cook (from below): Corks! Just my luck! I backed Sparrowshanks!

Tin Openers Needed

Bobby: "Uncle, do big fish eat little fish like sardines?"

Uncle: "Yes, certainly, my boy."

Bobby: "How do they open the tins, uncle?"

Heard at College

First Student: "What shall we do to-day?"

Second Student: "I'll spin a coin. If it's heads, we'll go to the pictures. If it's tails, we'll go to the palace; and if it stands on its edge we'll study."

Fishy!

Margie: The scales are fastened on fish just like the plates on a house, aren't they, mamma?

Mother: Yes, dear.

Margie: I suppose they are put on that way to keep the fish from leaking!

She Knows Abe

Teacher: "Do you know your alphabet?"

Little Girl: "Yes, miss!"

Teacher: "Well, what comes after A, B?"

Little Girl (raising her voice): "My boy!"



The Decoy

Nasty Knock for Daddy

Father (to daughter about five years of age): Now, Nancy, don't you think you are a lucky little girl when your father has a motor-cycle to take you rides? Most little girls' fathers haven't got them.

Nancy: No, daddy; they have motor-cars!

Not All Asleep

Grandfather was taking a nap, and his little granddaughter was sent to call him to dinner.

"Was he asleep?" asked her mother, when Floodie came back.

"All but his nose, mamma," was the reply.

In Justification

Mother: "Why, Willie! Striking your little sister?"

Willie (doggedly): "Auntie made me."

Mother: "Why, Willie! I said if you did strike her I would never kiss you again."

Willie: "Well, I couldn't let a chance like that slip."

Not to be Caught

Fussy Old Gent. (to boy who keeps continually sniffing sitting next to him in train): "My boy, have you got a handkerchief?"

Boy: "Yes! but my mother said I wasn't to lend it to anybody!"

Yard of Milk,

Please!

Boy (crushing to demonstrate his wish):

"Would you give me a yard of milk, please?"

Milkman (not to be taken in): "Will I wrap it up for you, sonny?"

When Johnny was being taken to the photographer to have his photo taken he cried and said he would not go.

"Why, Johnny," said his mother, "you just sit still a minute and it is all over."

Johnny: "But that's what you told me at the dentist's."

He Was Stung At

Right

Resident: "So you've been visiting our schools, eh?"

Splendid, aren't they? Magnificent discipline! Superb buildings! Beautiful furnishings! By the way, I want to ask what was the first thing that struck you on entering the boys' department?

Visitor (truthfully): "A pea from a peashooter."

Does Politeness Pay?

First Tramp: "Ye'll find it pays to be polite, gardner."

Second Tramp: "Not always, I guess. The other day I was actin' deaf and dumb, when a man giv' me a three-penny bit. I says, 'Thank you, sir,' and he had me arrested."



Kept In Suspense

Bobby: "Mother did you hear the ladder fall?"

Mother: "No, dear. I hope father hasn't hurt himself?"

Bobby: "Not yet. He's still clinging to the gasolier."

Fred's "S.O.S."

Fred was being sent to a boarding school.

"Now," said his father, "when you write do not send me pages and pages describing all the pupils, where they come from, and what classes they are in, because I really haven't time to read it all."

A few weeks later his father received the following: "Dear Father—S.O.S., L.S.D., R.S.V.P.—Fred."

Willie's Dreadful Secret

The guests were seated at the table when Willie was heard clamoring for wine.

"Oh, no," his mother replied, "you mustn't have wine, my boy."

"Then I'll tell 'em all," he cried, and, standing on his chair, he shouted: "My new trousers were made out of our old window blinds!"

Collapse of mother.

PRIZES FOR JOKES

The following prizes are awarded for jokes:—

1. Seward, Victoria rd., Birkenhead, S. Aust.: Robert Glens, "Glandsfield," Lower Ferntree Gully, Vic.; Frank Nott, Berwicklock, Vic.

Gully Gold

by Bernard Cronin

Author of "The Timber Wolves," etc.



Synopsis of Previous Chapters.

Since Henderson, "Frog" Mason, and "Skinner" Smith, three schoolboys, who are spending a holiday on the cattle station of Tom's father in the north-west of Tasmania, discover Jerry Hunter, an old prospector, in a dying condition. That he kept out with them is undoubted. As the boys find out that he suffers mysterious words concerning a gold mine.

Early on the boys determine to visit Jerry's hut, in the hope of finding some clue. Tom and "Frog" leaving "Skinner" in the hut, set out to explore the country, and make startling discoveries in a place called Snake Gully. Meanwhile, a Mexican named Lopez, and Bill Clasp, his mate, who are also aware of the existence of the gold mine, give a hand in Jerry's hut and discover Skinner, whom they carry away to their camp in the bush, as they fear that he knows too much. As soon as Tom and "Frog" learn of "Skinner's" disappearance, they set out in search of him.

Skinner is rescued by his two friends, and taken on board by the Mexican's dog, an animal of remarkable strength and ferocity. Amazing adventures follow. The boys are rescued by the Mexicans and Bill Clasp, but then all three who assist those of the two boys, and a succession of exciting incidents take place. The material in this comic serial will give unusual developments.

CHAPTER XX.

Bill Clasp Makes His Exit

IN that first moment of dismay which witnessed the unexpected for appearance of their encounter, Tom and Frog were taken completely by surprise. They were within an arm's distance of Bill Clasp's great, slapping hand was but a few inches from Tom when the big man stumbled over a stone and fell on his knees. The moment's respite was Tom's salvation. Without regard to the injuries of encounter he deliberately kicked his would-be captor hard on the shin and bolted down the gully forthwith.

Frog had fared no less luckily. A heavily aimed handful of gravel lodged fairly in the Mexican's face, blinding him for several seconds, and returning him to a state of marvellous fury. That Lopez and Bill Clasp should immediately afterwards come into accidental but violent collision was only one more in a series of incidents which were little short of providential.

In the rush to escape the boys became separated. Frog ran on steadily, his whole desire being to gain the mouth of the gully and hide himself in the friendly shelter of the scrub. He heard Bill Clasp lumbering in pursuit, but felt no added alarm. He believed himself to be quite safe. Four accidents. The big man might certainly be more familiar with the locality, but Frog knew himself to be much the faster of the two. And so it proved. In a few minutes all sounds of the chase had died away, and Frog, panting heavily, came to a

halt just outside the gully entrance, and mopped his face thankfully. Of Tom there was no sign, but this did not worry him. Tom could safely be trusted to look after himself.

For some minutes Frog was too winded to do more than sit on the butt of an uprooted sapling in the shadow of the bush. Presently the humor of the situation made its appeal, and he tossed himself grinning widely.

"Still back, all right," he muttered, "though it could have been worse. Proggie, my son, you'll have to be more careful, or you'll come a good flat. Funny those greasy businessmen hopping in on us like that!"

In the midst of reviewing events his thoughts reverted to Skinner, and he became instantly grave again. What had happened to him? Had he sensibly gone into hiding, or had he made shift to follow them from the gully, and so fallen once more into the hands of Bill Clasp and Lopez? The speculation made Frog a little uneasy. He rose to his feet and stood listening, but could hear nothing but the sigh of the wind. The sky was heavily overcast. Only a faint glimmer of light now penetrated the recesses of the scrub.

Presently, whilst he stood hesitating, it began to rain. Without more ado he crawled under the low branches of a honey-suckle, and there remained until the rain cleared. When he reappeared the moon was once more shining brightly. But for the dripping leaves and the damp stench of the air, no trace remained of the squall

that had sent him under cover. The night sky had cleared rapidly.

Frog's first action was to purse his lips and emit the cuckoo's whistle. For some time there was no response. Then, from a point some distance away on the right, came an answering call. He whistled again and began to move forward, all his caution now in evidence. Beyond a doubt it was Tom, yet he did not mean to be caught napping a second time if he could help it.

Whilst at intervals, and guiding himself by the ready replies, it was not long before he saw the figure of his pal emerging from the scrub. They gave each other a sober greeting.

"What about old Skinner?" were Frog's first words.

Tom looked carefully about him before replying.

"Skinner? Oh, I think he's all right. They wouldn't know he was with us. And, anyway, he's bound to have heard the rumpus and dug himself in somewhere. All the same, if he doesn't show up soon we'll go along and see what's doing."

"But look here; you know he can't make tracks out of there until the coast is clear," Frog reminded him. "Oh, no—we'll just have to float around until those two birds return to their camp."

"Whereabouts are we?" demanded Tom. "I'm clean out of my reckoning. That business scared the wits out of me for a minute or two. I've been running around the place like a Dutch uncle. Look at me!"

He exhibited a rent in his trouser leg extending from the knee to the ankle. "The horse and was tucked into his sock as the only way to preserve a semblance of comfort."

"What d'you know about that?" I caught it on a spike just after we got going. If the cloth hadn't ripped I believe Lopez would have grabbed me. I got away just in time. That beggar can run like fun. He gave me all I knew to get away from him."

"My hat's gone," said Frog, rather unnecessarily, since the fact was self-evident. What's more, I haven't the faintest idea where I dropped it. There up, we'll soon be in more trouble!"

"Which way does the mouth of the gully lie, Proggie?"

Frog pointed to the left.

"Down there, I know because I was just outside it when you answered my whistle, and I came straight up here. Now about returning and working in as close to the entrance as we can? We've got to be in a position to see those chaps come out? He started to lead the way through the wet bush. "Are you game to come back here tomorrow?"



Waste of Soap

"Herbert, your uncle is coming for tea. Go up and wash your face."

"Yes, but what if he doesn't come."

"Tomorrow," echoed Tom. "It's to-morrow tonight. Do you know the time? It's half-past ten."

"Cricket!" was all Frog could find to say.

"And what's more," continued Tom, "there must be an end to this hide-and-seek business right away. Things are getting too hot. As soon as it comes daylight we'll make a dash for it, get out of Snake Gully. There is a way out, you know, if we can only find it. It's the only sensible thing to do now."

"How are we going to set about it?" asked Frog, as they sat down to give Bill Clasp and the Mexican time to return to their camp. "We can climb the cliffs. And Skinny hasn't the ghost of an idea how they brought him into the gully, except that he rode most of the way."

"Ask me another. But I bet I'll think something up before long. Now, we'd better sit tight and say nothing for awhile. We don't want to give ourselves away. That Lopez has got ears like a cat."

It was fully an hour before their patience was rewarded. The men passed them by at some little distance, yet close enough to enable them to see Lopez shuffling along in the lead. Bill Clasp was muttering to himself. In a little while they had moved out of sight.

Tom got to his feet. "Come on, Froggy," he remarked.

They retraced their steps up the gully until they arrived once more on the border of the amphitheatre. There was no sign of Skinny.

Frog halted and put his fingers to his mouth.

"There he is," exclaimed Tom, as a wavering whistled came in reply. He went forward to meet the shadow that appeared suddenly from behind a big boulder. "By gum, he's hurt himself. What's the matter, Skinny?"

"Save us, have you been run through a chair-cutter, or what?" asked Frog. But his voice quickly lost its note of badinage as he caught Skinny by the arm in time to save him from falling. "What's wrong, old chap? Those waters didn't catch you, did they?"

"It's... it's only my ankle," Skinny tried weakly to explain. He brought the swollen member into view. "It's a beaut, isn't it?"

"Not snake bite!" cried Tom, in swift alarm.

"I sprained it," Skinny reassured them. "I say, those two have gone, haven't they? Don't look at me as if I was a circus!"

Tom was eyeing him with perplexity.

"Not a circus, old soul—a side show at a bazaar. Have you been speaking out of your turn, or what? You look as if you'd been trying to understand yourself with your teeth. What else has happened to you?"

Hobbling along slowly between his friends, Skinny related his share of the night's adventures. He found it hard to speak of the yellow dog without a reminiscence shudder. The others listened excitedly.

"Well, you're a whale for trouble, you are," Frog told him. "Can't you leave some for somebody else? Now, see what you've done. How are we going to get away from Snake Gully tomorrow—I mean today—with your foot like that? Poor old Fat!"

"Oh, yes; that's me," said Skinny pluckily, but with a little note of pain in his voice. "I'm the original Juggins. But I can't help it, you know."

"Of course you can't," said Tom soothingly. "Well, we'll have to alter our plans, that's all about it. Instead of all getting hence, only one

of us will be able to go now. We can't leave you by yourself, Skinny."

"Ill toss you who goes," suggested Frog. "You won last time we tossed, but..."

"Nothing doing," said Tom quickly. "Hold on—we'll settle all that later. How's the head, Skinny?"

"I won't deceive you—it hurts a bit," said Skinny, in an effort to joke. "If it wasn't that I'd probably lose myself I'd say go ahead and let me follow on my own. I hope we aren't chased by any snakes."

Tom scarcely heard him. His mind was busy with coming problems. He was not at all sure that he ought to ride for help. In a way it might look

to go. You and Skinny will be as right as rain in the cave until we come back."

"Oh, you're picking the easy job for yourself—as per usual," grumbled Frog cunningly.

But Tom refused the bait. "I can't help it if you think that. But I know you're only talking through your hat. You're just trying to bluff me out of doing my plain duty. Try again."

"How will you do it?" asked Frog, trying to conceal his disappointment.

"I asked you that once before, and you didn't know."

"But I know now," said Tom quietly.

"You remember that big roan horse that Bill Clasp rode when we ambushed him with the water? Well, my idea is to saddle the roan as soon as it's



"It's Bill Clasp! Come away—he's dead!" said Tom.

like desertion at a critical time. There was no knowing what would happen during his absence, and he hesitated to appear to evade the responsibilities of his leadership. On the other hand, the attempt to find a way out of the gully was sure to be attended by considerable risk. As yet he had no idea how to go about the matter. He only knew that it was imperative that they should get out of the awkward position they were in, as it verged closely upon tragedy.

He was still lacking a decision when Skinny began to speak of the Mexican's attempt to knife his bur companion.

"I'm sure he really meant to do it. Lopez is as treacherous as a snake. I wonder at Bill Clasp trusting him. He'll be sorry he did one day, as sure as eggs."

"That settles it," said Tom unceremoniously.

"Settles what?" asked Frog. "Why, that I ride off at daylight. Yes, I will. With a man like Lopez hanging round it's high time we did something. The sooner the police take a hand in the game the better for us all. It's no use arguing, Frog, because I won't listen. It's my place

light enough for you and me to find our way to the horse yards. I'll ride aim to the point where we first got a sight of Bill Clasp, and then let him have his head. I'll bet a shilling to a gooseberry that the roan takes the right track on his own accord."

"Brains!... brains!" applauded Skinny. "That's the dinkiest notion I've heard for ages."

Frog offered his hand gravely.

"I second the motion. Tummy, you're a marvel. Good on you!"

Little more was said until they came to the cave, when Tom left the others in order to get the stump of candle which he had secreted handily in readiness for just such an emergency. By its aid they were enabled to pass without accident along the gutter. Arrived at the grotto, Skinny was made to seal himself with his ankle under the trickle of cold spring water.

"Keep it there as long as you can," advised Frog. "I'll dish you up some hot water in a moment or so. When you've fomented it well bind it tightly with a handkerchief."

He set about making a fire, but exclaimed suddenly. "Golly, I've got no matches."

Tom searched his pockets and pro-

doused his own box. It held three matches.

"Is that all you've got?" asked the fat woman, anxiously.

"If you ask me, we're lucky to have any at all," said Tom. "We'll just have to hunt up a good back log and keep the fire going in that way. Anyhow, it shouldn't be for long. I ought to be back by three in the afternoon, at latest."

"What time is it now?" inquired Skinny, yawning.

"Nearly four in the morning. It'll be daylight in an hour. We've just time for a drink of tea before we start."

"You're still convinced you're the man for the job, then?" said Frog.

"I am," replied Tom simply. He looked earnestly at his pals. "Now, mind and still stick here until I come back. No funny business. There's time enough to last you for some days. If I don't show up by, say, tomorrow morning, you'll know that something has gone wrong. In that case don't bother about me. If Skinny is able to walk, just go ahead and find a way out for yourselves. At the worst, you could follow the river until you come to the sea coast, and get out that way."

"Sounds easy," said Frog. "But I think I'd prefer some other way, thank you. It's 12 miles to the coast, if it's a yard."

A little later they left Skinny coiled comfortably in his blankets. He had strict instructions not to allow the fire to burn out.

"A lucky beggar, he is," Frog grumbled sleepily, as he followed Tom down the gutter. "Still, he's had a fairly rough passage, and I suppose he's about due for a loaf. It's a minute to five o'clock, Tommy."

In the east the sky was already brightening. All trace of the rough weather had gone. The air was warm and muggy, even at that early hour. By the time they arrived within sight of the river the first beams of sunshine touched the crests of the distant hills. A flock of black birds called monotonously as they went scavenging over the adjacent backwater flats.

Tom paused on the bank of the river and looked longingly at the cool, inviting water.

"I wish we had time for a dip, but I suppose it wouldn't do to risk it. It's going to be a corker of a day, too. When things settle down, Frog, and we come back to open up that prospect of Jerry's, we'll most certainly camp along the river here. We'll have the time of our young lives—too true, we will. Come on!"

He turned reluctantly and began to lead the way downstream, following the soft pull of the water as it rippled and creamed on its course seawards. The low banks were covered thickly with low undergrowth. Here and there tiny gutters ran through the black, peaty soil to drain themselves of the over-

night rain. In the shallows, the eddies spun glittering in the growing sunshine. Birds twittered in the bushes.

"It's like a bit of fairy land," Frog commented. He added thoughtfully, "At least it would be if it wasn't for the flies. This myrtle country is the limit. A regular breeding ground for them. They come out of the punky myrtle logs."

The drone of insects was plainly noticeable. Flies clung to the stems of the reeds, rising to sluggish flight at the warming touch of the sun. The air seemed full of them.

Tom topped a sand-ridge and dropped into the hollow beyond. The river bank was only a few feet away. He could hear the lap lap of the water quite plainly.

He turned to go on, but suddenly restrained himself. He was conscious of a curious depression.

"What is it . . . what's the matter with me?" he asked himself.

"Herry up, Juggins," came Frog's impatient voice from behind. "I can't get down till you move. What's wrong? Gone to sleep?"

Tom squeezed himself against the

between the broad shoulders protruded the back of a small head. Frog continued to stare with a kind of fearful fascination.

"He did get him then . . . he killed him after all," he mumbled stupidly. "He must have had another knife."

Tom caught his arm in a grip that hurt.

"Come on out of this," he commanded huskily.

Without another word they turned and ran.

CHAPTER XII

The Fight on the Shore

The roan horse was fortunately easy to catch. He stood quietly enough while Tom saddled up and adjusted the stirrups to his own length. The lid mounted and turned a white face to Frog.

"I just hate to leave you after this, but it's more urgent than ever that we should get help. Don't hang around after I've gone. Go straight back to Skinny. More than likely that . . . that beast Lopez is up in the gold gully, but you never can tell. I'll be back as soon as ever I can."

Frog reached round to his belt and pulled out the old tomahawk.

"Here, take this with you. It's not much to defend yourself with, but it's better than nothing at all. If you meet Lopez ride right over him."

They exchanged a quick hand-clasp.

"Good luck," Frog called huskily.

He waited until Tom was out of sight, and then set out on the return trip. The journey passed without incident of any kind. He neither heard nor saw anything of the Mexican.

Skinny was out of bed and anxiously awaiting his arrival.

"I've made some fresh tea," the boy announced. "Tom got away all right."

"I hope so . . . I think so. How's the foot?"

"It's easier," said Skinny thankfully. His sharp eyes noted the extreme gravity of his friend's face, and he put a question quickly. "What's wrong? What are you looking down your nose like that for? Did you have another go-in with those birds . . .?"

"It's bird now—not birds," Frog answered. "There's only Lopez left now."

Skinny still stared uncomprehendingly.

"Where's Bill Clasp then?"

"Dead. Stabbed in the back the same way as Jerry Slanter." Frog entered on a sober account of the morning's discovery. "I tell you, Skinny, it's pretty rotten."

"And you know he wasn't such a bad chap after all—Bill Clasp. I mean, if it hadn't been for him I don't think I should be here now. What shall we do?"

"Nothing," replied Frog. "Just wait until Tom comes back. Look here, old chap, all the gold in the world isn't worth a man's life. First Jerry and now Bill Clasp. I begin to hate the thought of the stuff. Of course Lopez is stark, staring mad."

"I yood looked right into his eyes like I have, you'd say so," agreed Skinny.

Frog roused himself with an effort. "Come on. Let's turn in again. I've been up all night. I'm dog tired. I do hope Tom's all right."

He lay down on his blankets and tried to sleep, but with small success. He was over tired to begin with. And strive as he would, he could not dislodge from his mind that picture of the dead man stretched in the quiet shade.



A Bit Mixed

"Will you give me a shpence, sir? I'm deaf and dumb."

"What! Deaf and dumb?"

"I mean I'm blind, sir. It's my twin brother who's deaf and dumb. We look so much alike that sometimes I get mixed up myself."

sand wall to make room for his pal.

"I don't know," he said queerly.

"I've got a rum sort of a feeling . . . something in the air . . . I can't place it."

He stood hesitating, wondering at the strange disquiet that was on him. The warm, soggy smell of the undergrowth seemed suddenly intensified. The hum of flies filled his ears.

On an impulse he walked to the edge of the river bank and looked down. Next second he started back with a shocked cry.

"What is it . . . what's the matter?" asked Frog, sharply. He shook off Tom's restraining hand and leant to see for himself.

Tom found a difficulty in speaking. "Bill Clasp. He's dead. Come away."

The big man was lying face down in the rushes directly beneath them.

The motion of the quiet water imparted a slight movement to his outstretched limbs. They seemed to tremble and shake, as if in pitiful protest against the cruel treachery that had robbed them of warm, full-blooded life. From

Australian "Willy Willy"

The "Willy Willy" is a severe cyclone, peculiar to the north-west coast of West Australia, and usually occurs from November to April, inclusive. These storms rage with tremendous fury, and are sometimes responsible for great havoc on sea and land. When a "Willy Willy" travels southward, after leaving the north-west coast, its passage is often marked by torrential rains. On one occasion a fall of 24.1 inches was recorded in 24 hours at Whim Creek, in the north.

low of the backwater. He could only toss and turn, and start nervously at every sound from without. It was a nightmare experience.

At length he felt that he could stand it no longer. He sat up and looked at the time. It was nearly two o'clock. "Asleep, Skinny?" he called softly. The fat youth grunted.

"I should say not. I can't sleep at all. Get the funny thing is that I'm nearly dead for want of it. I keep getting horrible dreams."

"Same here," said Frog. He kicked the fire together and swung the killy.

"Tom ought to be back any time now," he said hopefully. "He can't come too soon to suit me, either. I'm about fed up with this place. I tell you what, Skinny, if it wasn't for your sore hoof, and if we had a gun, or something, we wouldn't wait for anyone. We'd just march out and take what was coming. But this doing nothing gets on a fellow's nerves."

"I wonder what Lopez is doing?" queried Skinny. "Up where the gold is, scratching away for dear life, I'll bet."

"If he's got any brains at all he'll be well out of the valley by now," said Frog grimly. "It's a length of time for his kind."

Skinny began to fuss over his ankle, and, for a time, Frog sat watching him in moody silence. Somehow his natural optimism had deserted him. He began to fidget, glancing every little while at his watch. Never in his life had the time passed so slowly. Each minute seemed to drag itself into an hour of fretful suspense. By three o'clock he was in a fever of impatience.

"I'm going down the gutter to see if there's any sign of Tom," he told Skinny abruptly.

"Don't do it," begged the latter, in alarm. "Don't be an ass. Sit tight and wait."

"If I do, I shall go dippy," said Frog, with conviction. "Tom said three o'clock at the latest, and it's three now. For all we know he may not have got out of the valley at all. I wish we could be sure."

"Don't be a mope," persisted Skinny. He was plainly opposed to being left alone any longer. "Look here, I'm going to make some flap-jacks. It's time we had a bite to eat, anyway. Just wait a little longer."

"I tell you I'm going down the gutter," said Frog, obstinately. "I shan't be long."

"S-s-shall I go with you?" asked Skinny. He balanced himself against the wall. "All right, then, I won't. Don't go too far, will you? And be sure to wash out or you'll find us in the soup properly."

Frog, without repining, walked slowly along the gutter into the open. No sound broke the quiet of the valley. In front of him the corner of deserted headland seemed to wait beneath the feet of the afternoon sun. The hills were wrapped in a purple haze. There was no wind.

For a long time Frog stood hesitating on the edge of the arena of bushes. In the end he began to move cautiously toward a bank of back ground on his right. Here, if anywhere, he might expect to find an interrupted view. He knew the move to be unwise, but his anxiety seemed to drive him on. Surely anything was better than the interminable torment of waiting.

The bank proved disappointing. It commanded an outlook of not more than a few chains on either hand. The intervening timber precluded him from obtaining the clear view down the length of the valley, which he had

hoped to find. He went on once more, cautiously, watching every step of the way. He passed from point to point, telling himself that each should be the last, yet persisting in spite of everything. So it was that he finally came to a spot where the grotesque outline of Skull Knoll flashed suddenly into view.

Frog sat down and considered. The knowledge that he had travelled so far from the cave had a disquieting effect. He scanned the summit of the rock, but could detect no evidence of present occupation. The place was evidently deserted, if not wholly, at least for such time as Lopez remained at the gold gully reaping the harvest his crime had made possible. In that case there remained no obstacle to Frog's continuing right up to the knoll itself, or even ascending, if he had a mind to do so. A finer look-out could not be found. For full chase was dead . . . and the big yellow dog was dead. Frog wondered if the Mexi-

All at once the Mexican's hand was about his throat, digging into the flesh.



can had discovered his body among the rocks. There remained only Lopez . . .

He decided suddenly that, since he had already come so far, he might as well continue on to the spot where they had laid in wait for half a day, and watch for Tom's coming there. Skinny would fret, but that could not be helped. Frog felt that to return might be more dangerous than to proceed. So, with a last careful look about him, he started down the bank that dipped, then rose again sharply to meet the half circle of open grass land fronting the knoll.

Having compassed three-fourths of the distance, Frog halted to get his breath. That part of the bank where he now stood curved inward to meet the river, ending in a shelf that overhung the river beach by some few feet only. It appeared that the bottom of the ravine was actually lower than the bed of the river itself, being separated

from it by the strata of solid rock forming the pedestal of Skull Knoll. It now occurred to Frog that he might proceed more easily by avoiding the rough ground altogether. It would be a comparatively easy matter, he told himself, to dash from the ledge to the river beach, and thence by a kind of half circle to the spot where Tom and he had last studied their imprisoned pal.

Accordingly he clambered over the loose rocks at the base of the knoll, balanced himself lightly on the shoulder of the knoll, then dropped to the sands below. The river was within a few yards, flowing smoothly to

meet the gap that showed in the distant hinterland. Immediately before him the shore curved sharply about a projection of the knoll wall. Frog stepped towards it, his whole object being to secure as soon as possible from such an undesirable neighborhood. He was halfway over the sands when some intuition made him glance ahead sharply. From around the side of the curve Lopez had stepped suddenly into view.

At the moment of recognition, the advantage lay with neither. Both were dumfounded by the unexpectedness of the meeting. Frog's face expressed nothing but consternation; that of the Mexican, a kind of surprised and angry triumph. Lopez was the first to speak.

"Ah, eet ees de other boys, eh? Ah! weel von say what eet ees von do here?"

Frog was not long debating what he should do. With the first shock of understanding what he told himself that only coolness could avail to help him. For the first time he was squarely face to face with the man who had slain both Jerry Slanter and Bill Clapp. It needed only the restless movement of the man's hands—the nervous glitter of his black eyes to convince Frog that he had to do with a man on the verge of insanity. Lopez was ragged and unkempt. His head was bare, exposing the hideous purple scar which marked the place where his ear was missing. His long, greasy black hair hung about his face like a horrid mane. His gums were drawn back in a hateful grin.

"What are you doing here, if it comes to that?" retorted Frog, affecting a coolness he was far from possessing.

"You are funny boy, eh?" Lopez eyed him watchfully.

"Do fast pass—where are he?" Or see set that you are alone, at?"

"No, I'm not alone," said Frog, continuing to stand his ground. He wished his heart wouldn't beat so painfully. It seemed to take his breath away. "If you want to know, the others are just round the bend there."

He expected that the statement would, at least, make Lopez careful of his actions. Instead, the Mexican shook his head and gave a short, throaty laugh.

"Eet weel not do. Not is a lie. De fast pass . . . non sabe. But de other boy, he ride de road yran. I shoot him! . . . me—Lopez. He lie and kook—so!"

For a second Frog went weak with horror. Had Lopez attacked him then the Mexican would have had an easy victory. If this thing were true! . . . But he would not believe it—he dare not believe it. Yes, it was plain that Lopez and Tom had met, or else how should the Mexican know of the road house? The thought turned Frog sick. With Bill Clapp out of the way. . . and Tom. . . and himself now in danger of a like fate, who would remain to bring this inhuman creature to book? The world without would know nothing of the tragedy until too late. And Skinny would be left to die like a rat in a trap, unless, by a miracle, he was rescued. Frog hit his lips to keep back the gasp of dismay that rose to them.

"You're only saying that. You know it's not true. You're just trying to frighten me," he cried, his own attempt to mislead now quite forgotten. "I know all about you. . . I know how Jerry Slanter came by his death. . . and Bill Clapp. . . and . . ."

Instantly he regretted having said it. The Mexican's face was distorted with fury. With no more than a grunt of warning he sprang at Frog.

At the sudden revelation of what Lopez meant to do, the lad made a swift dash to escape. Disaster met the attempt. His foot twisted in the loose sand, and he half stumbled, half fell. Before he could recover his balance, Lopez gripped him cruelly by the wrist. With his free hand Frog battered desperately at the sallow face pressed so close to his own that the breath from it stirred the hairs of his head. He made a vain, spared himself the effort. Strive as he would, he could not break free. And all at once the Mexican's hand was at his throat, digging into the flesh about his windpipe with talon-like fingers, deliberately choking him to death.

For Frog it seemed the end of all things. The open sky, the placid

gleam of the river, the calling of the birds—these things became blurred and unrecognizable beyond hearing or understanding in the swirling red mist that settled about his senses. He thought of Skinny, the blood sang in his ears, and he felt himself grow limp.

And then—just as it seemed as if his life must snuff out like a candle flame—an amazing thing happened. He was conscious of a smashing blow in the chest, the cruel clenching fingers relaxed, and he felt headlong on the sand. To his fancy voices were shouting at him—the high-pitched, horrible howl of his enemy, and one other, strangely familiar and seemingly thousands of miles away. For just a second his sight cleared. He saw Lopez clinging to the walls of the knoll above him like some monstrous fungus. The distant crack of a gun came to his ears. One more the masks closed about Frog as he lay. The voices were louder now, and more persistent. They troubled his flickering consciousness painfully. Why didn't they go away and leave him in peace? An enormous lividness pervaded his body. The pain in his chest was agonizing.

"No again, Stevens. . . "Frog, old chap. . . "There he is. . . "Stop or I fire!"

Followed a fury of sound roaring at Frog's ears, and the red mist turned to black oblivion.

CHAPTER XXII. Fate Plays Its Hand

When Frog returned to consciousness he was still lying on the sands of the river shore. Something soft was bunched under his head, and his face and head were wet. His opened his eyes to see Tom bending anxiously over him. Close by stood Mr. Henderson and another man.

"How are you feeling now, Froggy?" came Tom's voice.

Frog sat up unsteadily and looked about him.

"Are we all dead together, or did you come in time? Where's Lopez?"

Henderson knelt and patted him softly on the back.

"We're all very much alive, Jack. I am glad to say. Yes, we came in time, but only just in time. Now don't bother to try and tell us all about it now. It will do later on. Your throat looks sore. Does it hurt you?"

Frog felt his neck gingerly.



Not a Fair Thing

Father: "Did you tell your teacher that I helped you with your French lesson, Jack?"

Jack: "Yes, but he wouldn't keep me in. He said it would not be a fair thing to make me suffer on that account!"

"It does a little, Mr. Henderson. Have you caught Lopez?"

"I'm sorry to say we haven't, old chap. Stevens—the trooper from Rewa, you know—and your uncle have gone after him, but I'm afraid they won't get him so easily. It's growing dark, you see, and they don't know the ins and outs of this outlandish gully of yours. What have you done with the Scotch?"

"Skinny? Oh, he's all right," said Frog, grinning in quite his old style. "I left him in the cave making flapjacks. I expect he's eaten them all by now. He wouldn't have anything else to do. Hales, Tommy, so you got out after all. The beastly Mexicans told me he'd shot you. He gave me the fright of my life."

"He tried to shoot me," said Tom. "Fortunately, it didn't come off. I threw the tomahawk at him just as he was taking aim, and then set the roan going hard. That's a horse to be proud of. The police will tell him, I'm going to buy him. Too true, I am. He's a corker!"

"We'd better make a start, Tom. I'm thinking we'll all have to camp here for the night. Any lucker left at this hour?"

"There'll be plenty unless old Skinny has given himself a birthday while we're away," said Frog. He rose to his feet, and was relieved to find that he was pretty well himself once more. "Where are your horses?"

"Just around the bend," Henderson told him, as they moved off. "Come on and see if you can ride one of them. Well, you three boys seem to have a wonderful knack of getting yourselves into extraordinary corners. I can tell you that I was quite worried when I arrived at the hut yesterday and found no sign of any of you. I could tell that the place hadn't been trod in for many days. I was just telling Mr. Sanders here all about it when Tom came tearing along on the roan horse and nearly knocked us over. We hunted up Stevens and your uncle—and here we are. Glad to see you."

"Too true," said Frog, fervently. Sanders, a neighbor of the Hendersons, laughed at the expression of the lad's face.

"In my young days I never had the luck to meet adventure really face to face as these have," he said, as he trifled anxiously. "Tom has been curdling the blood in our veins by telling us all that has happened to you during the past week. What's this I hear about finding gold?"

"It's perfectly true," announced Frog. "We'll take you along and you can see for yourself."

"Gold has never been found in payable quantities at this corner of the island," said Henderson earnestly. He winked at Sanders. "I don't want to disappoint you, but have you ever heard of pyrites, or . . ."

"There—I knew all along you didn't really believe me," said Tom, indignantly. "Mr. Sanders is an old miser. Show him a specimen or two, Froggy."

Sanders examined the specimens carefully. He turned to Henderson with a gleam of excitement in his eyes. "I had better be speaking to Peter. This is gold without a doubt—and good gold, at that."

"Is it so?" exclaimed Henderson. He examined the tiny nuggets with respect, finally showing in his face.

"Now, what have they got to do? Boys are evidently more wise awake than some of us imagined."

"You'll come along to the gully?" asked Tom eagerly.

His answer was gravely. "Later on, Tom, not now. Sorry, old chap, but there are more serious matters in hand. Don't worry, though. When things settle down you

can come back and peg claims to your heart's content. And I shouldn't be at all surprised if Mr Sanders and I came with you. That is, if you will allow us to have a peep into the golden casket."

"The idea!" exploded Frog. "Haven't we just asked you to come? There's . . . there's tons of it."

"We'll be satisfied with hundred-weights," Mr Henderson assured him, with an amused smile. He turned to Tom. "By the way, do Stevens and Grey know where your cave is? Did you tell them? They will have a job otherwise. This place is a regular maze."

"I gave them a general idea," said Tom. "It isn't an easy place to describe, you know. We may sight them as we go along. I wonder if they've caught Lopez."

"They will in the end," said Sanders grimly. "He's rather too lively a person to be allowed at large."

As it happened, they found Grey and Stevens further along the valley. They were empty-handed, much to the boys' disappointment. Aided by the growing dusk and his own intimate knowledge of the locality, Lopez had given them the slip for the time being.

"But he can't get very far before he's pulled up, that's one comfort," said Stevens. "I think myself, though, that he won't venture into the open at all. He'll probably go into hiding somewhere and try to tire us out."

"Are either of them known to the police, by the way?" asked Mr. Henderson, as they once more rode on.

"Bill Clasp was not," returned the trooper. "At least, not in the way you mean. He seems to have been fairly decent until he met with the other fellow. Lopez had a pretty bad reputation down the coast. Mexican Pete was the name he generally went by. He was a rough-rider in an overseas circus troupe, and, they say, joined up at Capetown."

"How are things now, Jack?" asked Grey with concern, of his nephew. "You boys want a thundering hiding, scoring us all like this. Didn't I tell you to let those calves of mine rip?"

Tom came to his pal's rescue. "Halloo, there's where the cave is. See, Mr Grey—just back of that wind-break."

Grey looked, and nodded. "Is it?" Well, I suppose I'll have to try cranks. I think you've been punished enough. What are we going to do with the horses, Stevens?"

The trooper was already taking stock of the narrow strip of open ground between the scrub and the cliff wall.

"Why, we'll tie them here, I think, and cut them a bundle or two of silver grass. They were well watered at the river, and ought to manage till

the morning. It's a fine night. You and I can camp down here and look after them, eh?"

"I'm with you," said Grey promptly. He turned hurriedly. "Great snakes, who's this?"

It was Skinny, hobbling down the gutter. He threw himself at his pals with a bowl of welcome.

"M-m-mum—I thought—I mean I've had an awful time," he gabbled ridiculously. "You're just in time for tea. Flip-jacks, you know. At least, you would have been only I ate them all while I was waiting. Have you caught that Lopez yet?"

Frog span him round and started him gently back up the gutter.

"You're raving, old soul. No, we haven't got Lopez. But we'll get him—don't fret. Tell you all about it later. How's the hoof now? I see you can walk a bit."

"Like a bird—like a bird," said Skinny. "I say, the fire's out. I forgot it, don't you know. By golly, I'm glad to see you chaps again."

It was late before the party settled for the night. Promptly at the first streak of dawn Stevens roused them for breakfast.

"We'll move along together for a while," the trooper told them. "Mr Henderson, if you'll take the boys along home, Grey and Sanders and I will double back after Lopez. But we'll see you safely out of the valley first."

"You want me to telephone to the sergeant, I suppose, as soon as I get in?" suggested Mr Henderson.

"If you don't mind," said Stevens. He looked to the loading of his revolver. "I'll need help to bring Bill Clasp's body in, whether I catch Lopez or not. You boys can point out the spot where he is, as we go along. All ready?"

Out in the open the air was full of the fragrance of dew-wet bush. Already the plains were brightening, and the black shadows dissolving from the nooks and crannies of the far off mountains. The song of the river came echoing to meet them as they rode.

"It's a beautiful spot, all right," said Sanders. "Just an ideal camping place. Well, we'll see later on, eh?"

Stevens and Grey rode some distance in advance. Frog and Tom followed, riding side by side. Skinny was double-banked behind Mr Henderson.

Tom was about to draw his father's attention to the snake bank which they were then approaching, when Stevens was seen to turn in his saddle and beckon. The trooper had reined in at the crest of a mound, and now appeared to be staring intently at something beyond.

"What's the matter?" called Mr Henderson softly.

"That's what I'd like to know. Would you say that was a man lying out there on the bank?"

"It's Lopez," affirmed Skinny excitedly.

The trooper's eyes snapped. "Asleep," suggested Sanders.

They sat watching tensely as Stevens advanced on the recumbent figure, saw him bend over it, then straighten himself rather hurriedly. When he returned his face was a little pale.

"Dead as a door mat. I never saw such a curious thing in my life. The man's snake-bitten all over. He must have been crossing at night and got bitten; at dawn to doctor himself, and got bitten again. Lost his head then and gave up. Just sat there and died. He's not a pretty sight. They must have crawled all over him." Stevens smiled grimly. "Mr Henderson, you'd better get the lads out of this. There'll be no need of us to go any further with you."

For some time after they moved off no one cared to speak.

Frog sighed dolefully.

"It looks as if the whole valley was on fire . . . the walls all shining like that. What does it make you think of, Skinny?"

"I dunno. Nothing."

"I thought of gully gold," said Frog soberly.

Skinny wriggled in his seat. Their old-time jest escaped his lips unconsciously.

"Of course. I never thought of that."

"Poor old Jerry," said Tom.

He took the hat from his head and sat for a moment looking down at the sunlit vista at their feet.

Then he rode on after the others.

THE END.



The trooper had reined in, and now appeared to be staring intently at something.

Making a Biplane Box Kite

By Aviator

NOW that the spring, with its strong breezes, has arrived, many boys will be turning their attention to flying. I propose to tell Pals how to make a box kite that is certain to fly well.

All that has to be purchased is a ball of fine but strong twine.

The wood for the frames can be made from an old packing case, and should not be thicker than 3-16 of an inch. You will want 24 small pieces of tin, about 1 1/4 in. long by 3/8 in. wide, for binding, as at A in Fig. 2, cut from kerosene tins.

A quantity of starch paste will be required, or it can be made from flour and hot water. Two sheets of brown paper or newspaper will do at a pinch.

These things, with scissors, a chisel or sharp knife, and a foot rule, are all that are required.

For the top plane get two pieces of thin wood 34 in. long, and for the rear top plane two pieces 22 in. long. These must not be more than 3-16 of an inch in section. There will also be required 12 pieces for the upright struts 6 in. long, and eight pieces 3 in. long. These must not be more than 3-16 in. in thickness.

In the perspective view of the kite, Fig. 1, which has been exaggerated to show the form, the sections shaded are those that have to be covered with paper. The vertical lines are the uprights, and the horizontal lines the planes.

The three box sections of the front plane are all 6 in. x 5 in. x 8 in. in length from the front to the rear, while the single box in the tail plane is of the same dimensions.

The portions of the top plane, both in the main plane and the tail plane, as at AA and BB, are 3 in. x 8 in., and a centre-piece of the fuselage on the top, which is 8 in. long by 4 in. wide is also covered.

In building up the framework you

should use for the fuselage or back bone of the kite four strips of wood, two feet in length. Mark these off into thirds—that is, of course, six sections. Then take the six sticks and bind as in Fig. 2, so as to form two sides with their supports. Do not attempt to complete this box at this stage, but turn now and make the top and bottom planes by the same method. Join the two sides of the main frame or fuselage in place, afterwards putting into place the outside sections C.C. You can then treat the rear plane in the same manner.

The framework is now complete, except for the bracing. This should be in the form of an X. In the main frame four of these are required. A start may now be made to cover the frame with the paper in the usual way, leaving about an inch to lap over at all edges.

The whole kite can then be set to

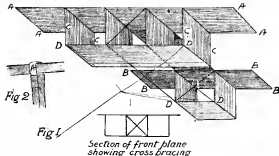
dry. The belly-band must be fastened in place, and this is the most important thing in the whole kite. If the instruction be departed from the kite will not fly.

I attempted to fly my kite with a single belly-band from the centre, but it was a hopeless failure, and caused great amusement to the onlookers by its antics. It did everything but fly, but when I fastened the band to all four corners it floated in the air as steadily as a bird.

This kite can be made smaller or larger than the measurements indicated, but if it is made larger it should be covered with calico, instead of with paper.

The total span of the front plane is 34 in., and the tail plane 22 in., while the length of the kite is 24 in.

A small and very light propeller may be fastened to the centre of the cross bracing.



Conjuring for Boys: The Dancing Sailor

(By "Magic Wand")

Most books on conjuring begin by saying: "The conjurer must first palm an egg or a half-crown," or do some other equally impossible feat. The ambitious boy reads so far, attempts to hide some such article in the palm of his hand, fails, then disgustively throws the book aside and drops the subject.

The following, however, is a neat little trick in which no special dexterity is required. Any boy can do it, but—and here comes the most important point of all—he must practice it over and over again until he has it perfect.

The performer takes a rough cardboard imitation of a sailor or soldier or some such personage. He holds it up to the audience to show that it is what it is represented to be. "It is as free from trickery," he explains, "as I am myself." He then takes his seat in a chair and places the figure on the floor before him.

It lies flat and inert. "Ah!" he says. "I know." My little friend wants some music. He starts to hum or whistle, or requests the pianist to

play some catchy tune and suddenly the figure on its feet when, suddenly, it seems to be galvanised into life, and dances before the spectators. The music ceases, the figure hesitates, gives a final kick, and then drops to the floor.

The performer picks it up and poses it around for inspection. Marvellous! Yes, until you know how it is done.

Before starting the performance, the conjurer fixes about one-half to three-quarters of a yard of black silk thread between his trouser legs. This can easily be done with the aid of a couple of small bent pins. Being black, the thread cannot be seen, and it is slack enough to let the conjurer walk about freely.

The figure, which is cut from stiff cardboard, has its arms and legs fastened loosely with small paper-fasteners so that they can swing freely. The projecting ears of the figure are bent slightly back so as to form two hooks.

Everything being ready, the figure is held up before the company. Then the performer takes his seat and places the figure in front of him on the floor, as he does so he hooks it on to the thread by the ears. He keeps his legs together and, as the thread is slack, the figure lies on the floor. Then, when the music starts, he opens his legs slightly, which draws the figure upright, its feet just touching the floor. With one foot he beats time to the music, the figure dancing up and down and throwing out its legs and arms in grotesque though life-like actions.

If properly worked, this little trick never fails to be greatly appreciated by both young and old.

A word of caution to the young beginner. To succeed, even in the simplest of tricks you must practise. A continuous flow of "patter" always helps the success of a trick. Above all, do not perform the same trick twice before the same audience. You may deceive them once, but it is highly improbable that you will do it a second time by the same means.

THE LOST SUBMARINE

BY MARK V. D'ARCY.



THE school holidays had started at last. Peter Macalister and Jim Staley had been looking forward for months to their long promised trip to the north. They were going over to stay with Peter's Aunt, who had asked him in a letter to come over next holidays and bring a friend with him. She had guaranteed them a good time, and now both boys were glad to be on their way.

They were on board the fine coastal steamer *Argo*, and although only a few hours out of port, both boys had already made a firm friendship with the captain. Consequently they were allowed the run of the ship, and it was on the bridge that they were standing when the excitement began.

When they left their home port neither Peter nor Jim had any idea that they were in for the greatest adventure of their lives. The sea was perfectly calm, and it was just getting dark when Jim saw ahead of them a large black shape rising slowly from the sea. He pointed it out to Peter, who immediately drew the attention of the captain. By this time they were nearly abreast of the object, and Captain Jackson, who had his binoculars focussed upon it, saw with surprise that it was a submarine.

"Well, I'll be hinged!" he said, thoughtfully. "What on earth are bits of our precious navy doing scouting round like this? Wonder if there's likely to be another war?" he ruminated.

The two boys had been watching the submarine as they listened to the captain, and now they saw several men emerge from the conning tower and move towards the bow of the sneaking craft.

"Look at them!" exclaimed Peter, excitedly. "They're all darkies except the one with clothes on."

"So they are, I do believe," replied Jim, with surprise. As far as they could see the black men were only loon clothes, making them look wholly out of place on the deck of a submarine.

Cautiously they watched as the men worked deftly, until suddenly Peter exclaimed, "Great Scott! Jim, they're getting the gun ready. What the dickens for?"

Saying this, he turned to the captain, only to see a look of bewilderment on the man's face. He had no more idea than the boys of what was in the wind.

They were soon to find out. Suddenly a voice hailed them through a megaphone, and at the same time they saw the muzzle of the gun swing round until it covered them menacingly. The voice came to

them across the water, sharp and bullying.

"Stop your flamin' engines and wait till we get alongside of you. If you don't—well—good-bye!" and the speaker, a strange looking man dressed in dirty white flannels, indicated with a careless wave of his hand the threatening muzzle of the gun.

The captain hesitated, astonished. He did not know what to do. Rolling with rage, his first impulse was to defy the submarine and dare the crew to do their worst, but then he heard the frightened whimpering of the women and children near the bridge. They had gathered together at the first alarm. Powerless, he realised that there was nothing for it but to obey the impudent and threatening order. Muttering angrily, the captain strode over to the engine room telegraph, and rang the signal "Stop!" down to the engineer.

The throbbing of the engines ceased, and the ship slowly lost way until the signal "Full speed astern" was given. The propellers thrashed the water, and the steamer stopped dead.

Now the submarine was drawing closer, and suspicion became a certainty. Every man on the deck of the craft (there were about twenty), was black, the one exception being the evil looking skipper. With a

the submarine came alongside. With the agility of cats half a dozen of her crew sprang on board, and it could now be seen by their light brown color and straight features that they were natives of one of the groups of islands in the Pacific.

Following them came the white man, swaggering on to the deck with all the pomp of an admiral of the fleet.

"He doesn't half love himself," whispered Jim.

"No," agreed Peter. "But what I want to know is what the silly coat is up to."

The natives formed a bodyguard round the strange looking ruffian as he approached the bridge, evidently bent on an interview with Captain Jackson, who awaited him, almost unable to control his fury. With two automatics stuck in the red scarf which did service as a belt, the leader looked every inch what he was — a modern pirate.

Approaching Captain Jackson, the man stood about three feet from him, and with folded arms stared insolently, with a villainous smile on his mouth. This was more than the captain could stand. Always quick tempered, he stepped forward as though he would strike the insolent face, but suddenly he found himself powerless in the grip of two of the sneaky natives.

"Well," he demanded sarcastically, "What do you want? If I didn't know that pirates had gone out before sailing ships, I should say you were one, but—"

"I am one!" broke in the stranger. "A real, live pirate, entirely at your service," and he bowed low as he spoke. Then, stepping forward, he drew one of the automatics, and waved it in the face of the infuriated captain as he spoke.

"If you don't do what I tell you," he continued, "I'll blow your tin pot ship to little pieces. Then I and my merry men can watch you and all your passengers struggling for breath as you drown like rats — a pleasant thought!"

The man laughed a loud, harsh cackle, and in his eyes there was a wild light, as though he were possessed. It was then that the boys were first doubtful of his sanity.

"The boogier's as mad as a hatter!" muttered Jim.

"Yes," agreed Peter, in the same low tone, afraid of being overheard. "And yet he seems to be an educated sort of chap. You know, he speaks good English and all that."

At that moment the pirate suddenly turned, and leaving the captain in the grip of his savage guards, paced to the edge of the bridge.

"Fill you sailors!" he roared. "Don't stand there gazing. Bring every blooming valuable thing you've got, and pile 'em in a heap on the deck. And don't forget," he threatened, "if there's any funny business you'll get this!"

Checking again, he fired a shot at random into the crowd of passengers. It struck the fleshy part of the leg of an old man, and he sank on the deck with a cry of agony. The women shrieked, and the men were enraged almost beyond control. Three or four of them started simultaneously to—



A Large Order

Boy: "Please grocer, give me six-pennorth of hundreds and thousands, and, please, will you count them, because mother said Johnnie was to have half!"

wards the pirate, but he drew the other revolver, and they scurried back.

In the meantime, the two natives had left the captain, and were once more gathered with the remaining four about the person of their chief. Jim and Peter, who had been whispering together, took the opportunity to speak to Captain Jackson in low, excited voices. He listened intently. Then he said doubtfully, "But you couldn't do anything even then. These confounded natives would polish you off in no time."

Jim, who had been on a long trip north of Australia, answered eagerly: "Oh, I could manage them all right. I've had some experience with the beggars."

With wrinkled brows the captain thought for a moment. Could he allow the thing they were asking? They were only youngsters, after all. But then, for boys of seventeen years, they were very well developed—anyway, perhaps it was worth risking. He couldn't leave the ship.

Turning to the boys he said kindly,

"Right—oh, boys, you can try it." Then he added admiringly. "By Jove! You're jolly plucky kids if you manage it."

"We'll do our best, anyhow," said Peter.

At this the captain started to move towards the intruder, saying with a dry smile as he turned away. "And meanwhile I'll do my best to entertain our pleasant little visitor."

The two boys, determined to carry out their purpose, left the bridge unobserved, and joining the frightened crowd below, moved towards the stern of the ship. They reached the spot, which they had in mind without being noticed. Here a rope had been left hanging over the ship's side, for what purpose they neither knew nor cared. Quickly removing their coats, collars and boots, they prepared for the plunge before them—it was July, and needless to say, they did not relish the ordeal.

"You can go first," said Jim, grinning. In spite of the dangerous undertaking in hand, both were apparently in the

best of spirits, though perhaps the humor was a trifle forced, neither being willing to show his nervousness to the other.

"Right—oh!" replied Peter, "I'm not frightened of a bath," saying which he swung himself over the railing, and, gripping the rope, slid, faster than he had intended, into the sea. The result was that his hand ached with the friction, and the splash was dangerously loud.

Listening for a moment or two to make sure that they were not noticed or heard, Jim followed his friend aboard, and soon they were swimming quickly side by side. Rounding the stern of the ship, they came in sight of the submarine.

Both were good swimmers, and soon they were to need all the skill they possessed. The natives on board the submarine were still gazing up at the deck of the steamer, but at any moment they might glance round and see the swimmers. Next, keeping close to the ship's side, and swimming as inconspicuously as possible, they slowly approached the submarine.

They now noticed with misgiving that some of the pirate's crew carried, stuck in their scanty clothing, knives and daggers of various formidable varieties.

Then Peter, signaling to Jim to wait, buried his head and duck-dived silently, while the latter trod water. For several seconds his friend was in suspense, but at last he saw his head appear right under one of the stern torpedo tubes of the vessel. Hang-



ing on to the rim of the tube, and kneeling under it, he nodded to Jim to follow his example.

Diving as neatly as his companion had done, Jim swam through the water with his lungs bursting for air. His eyes straining for a sight of his goal, he at last touched Peter's foot and rose to the surface, gasping for breath.

"Shut up!" hissed Peter, fearful lest his friend's gaze should be heard. The cold eating into their very bones, they hung to the torpedo tube for what seemed hours. Above they could hear the wild bragging of the pirates, the clink of metal as the money and jewelry fell on to the heap, and the frightened murmurs of the passengers. At last the work was finished. The heap was rapidly passed down to the submarine, and followed by the now sensively grinning pirate and his bodyguard of uncivilized islanders.

As the leader left the ship, he called back to the captain:

"Don't forget, my beauty. Any woman or funny little tricks like that and you'll have a salt-water taste in your mouth."

With this parting warning, he went below to start the dynamo, and the huge steel fish began to pulse with life as she swung round and left the side of the steamer.

As the submarine gathered speed the boys had their falling strength taxed to the full in maintaining their hold against the rush of water. Luckily a low speed only had been attained as the chief again appeared, and, coming towards them, stood chucking to himself almost above their heads as the steamer was being slowly left astern.

Suddenly the blood of the two boys went icy cold, and they stared at each other in horror, as the wretch spoke mumbly to himself in a low tone, but loud enough for them to hear.

"Just one little torpedo would fix things up nicely," he was saying. "This ought to be just the right distance away. Then won't they swim? Won't they drown like cattle in a flood?"

With a new surge of horrible enjoyment at his own wicked thoughts, he turned as though to carry out his purpose.

This was the chance for which the boys had been waiting. The natives were gathered in a group forward, in the other end of the submarine. Stealthily and with difficulty, for they were cramped with cold, the boys pulled themselves on to the greasy deck of the submarine. As they stood up, Peter's foot slipped, and he recovered his balance only after a moment, the noise of which caused the pirate chief to swing round with the snarl of a caged tiger.

Quick as thought the tide acted. Peter dived straight for the man's ankles, whilst Jim dealt him a terrible blow on the temple. Backwards he fell, and with wonderful presence of mind Jim snatched the two revolvers from his belt.

There sounded in the ears of the boys a wild, gurgling scream as the sea closed over a face hideously contorted with fury.

But the danger was not yet over. Seeing the attack on their leader, the islanders made a rush towards the two brave boys. Turning towards the approaching mob, the boys armed them with their newly procured weapons, while Jim held up his left hand with a commanding gesture.

The natives waved, then stopped. The upraised blades gleaming in the first rays of the rising moon were dropped again to their sides. Taking immediate advantage of this indecision

on the part of the natives, Jim lowered his revolver, and, motioning Peter to do the same, moved carelessly towards them.

His heart beating furiously with the nervous strain, Jim muttered his best disfect, and, speaking to one whom he surmised to be the chief man among them, said:

"Put away your knives. We will not harm you. The man we killed was a bad white man—he had in him an evil spirit—but we are good whites, and will treat you well."

The tension was over. The bold action had had its effect, and the brown-skinned men began to replace their curious knives. Their head man stepped forward to meet Jim, raising his arm in a sign of peace.

"We know not the magic of this devil fish," he said, "and it is our wish to again reach our beloved island. The good white young men will perhaps take us there?"

Jim nodded assent, and, signing to Peter to follow him, they entered the conning tower of the vessel.



Too Late

"Ah! I suppose you want me to play Indians with you, heinie?"

"I'm afraid you wouldn't do, uncle. You've been scalped already."

During their recent ordeal the boat and its crew were moving, but in what direction they knew not.

"Where is your island?" asked Jim of the head man, who had followed them. He walked to a map of the Pacific which was hanging a short way from them, and, pointing to it, said: "From this the white pirate read his whereabouts."

Looking at the map carefully, they noticed a small black cross indicating a spot to the north of Australia. From it towards the mainland was drawn a thin line, in a south-westerly direction.

"That must be the island," said Peter, indicating the cross. "And I suppose that line is the course that has been taken."

Neither Peter nor Jim knew much about navigation, but they set the course as near as they could judge, and, opening the full power of the dynamo, trusted to luck.

Suddenly Peter crashed Jim's arm, and, pointing to the steel sheeting before them, burst out excitedly, "Jim—Jim, look at that!"

Following the direction of the other's pointing finger, Jim saw an oval sheet of black steel, with certain figures in white relief upon it.

He gasped with astonishment. His excitement growing, Peter continued, "Why, we've found the lost submarine. Shake on it, Jim old man. You remember, she was missed, and never heard of again. Well—here she is. What do you know about that? Let's ask old funny-face about it."

They turned to the head man, and upon Jim's questioning him, he related the following story:

"Many moons ago the people of my island were frightened because this strange fish floated into our lagoon and on to our beach, and always we were afraid to go near it, for we knew not its magic. But the white man came to our beach in a little sailing canoe, and frightened us with his fire sticks. When he learned of the fish monster he went to it and climbed inside. Soon he came out again and made our warriors push it back off the beach. When he told some of us to come with him, promising us reward, and we came inside the evil fish, and the rest you know."

His hearers looked at each other in amazement after the recital had ended, for Jim had slowly translated the story to Peter.

As luck would have it, they struck the island after a brief run, and the relieved islanders swarmed gratefully back to their native shore.

How they managed the submarine the boys never could remember, but to young and energetic people all things are possible in an emergency. However, they soon found themselves throbbing their way back towards Australia.

"Best thing we can do now," said Jim dubiously, "is to get her back to where we last saw the steamer."

Peter granted an assent, and the submarine continued to throb her way across the moonlit ocean.

"Hurrah!" cried Peter suddenly. He had been peering out across the bows. "Here comes a destroyer!"

He was right. Throwing up a bow wave which sparkled like diamonds in the moonlight, a destroyer was dashing towards them at full steam, and soon they had delivered the submarine into the hands of a trim looking young naval officer, to whom they related the whole story. When they had finished, he clapped them across the shoulders in a congratulatory manner.

"Well," he remarked admiringly, "all I can say is, you're jolly plucky lads. The country will be proud of you—very proud."

The boys felt embarrassed under this generous tribute, and bowed it.

"By the way," went on the lieutenant commander, "the man you finished off is the man we were after. Escaped lunatic, used to be a very clever engineer. Suddenly went barmy and was locked up in an asylum. He got out and was last seen leaving for the islands in a fishing smack. We had orders to look out for him."

Two days later the boys landed only to find themselves the heroes of the hour. The newspapers were full of the story of their adventure and it was on the lips of all.

But the thing that pleased Peter and Jim most was the £250 cheque which they received from a grateful government.

The Logic of It

Suppose that there are two boys—A and B. A declares that he (A) is untruthful. B says that A is not.

Now, if B is right A is not untruthful. Therefore, A is wrong and is telling a lie. Therefore, B is wrong. I.e., if B is right he is wrong.

—Sent by W. H. Bewe, Frankston, Vic.

Hints on Summer Camping

By Geo. Colville



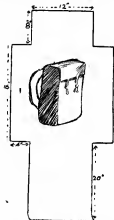
of these bags will be useful. Keep a bag in your pocket, in case you get a chance to acquire food along the road. At night one of them, filled with broken or leaves, will serve as a comfortable pillow.

The pack is really one of the most important items in the camper's outfit. Care should, therefore, be taken in designing it, so that the weight is properly distributed. Less energy will then be required to carry it with ease during the long walks in heavy country.

A good pack can be made after the style of that used by our infantrymen. This will stand a good deal of knocking about, and can be made by following diagram No. 2. This will last a long time. It should be made of unbleached calico or light canvas, and be machine-sewn, or, better still, hand-sewn with strong linen thread and turned inside out when completed.

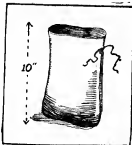
Care must be bestowed on arranging the articles in the pack to ensure complete comfort, as a badly arranged pack will most certainly make the hills seem higher and the roads longer. In

stowing the pack be careful to keep the side nearest the back flat and free from any protruding object such as a knife or fork. Place all the loose articles in the bottom, finishing up with the bags containing the food. It is advisable to wear the blanket bandolier, as this tends towards a more even distribution of the weight.



No. 2—Finished Pack and Material Cut to Shape to Make It.

As there is nothing like being prepared, it is as well to begin collecting and preparing your equipment as the time is soon coming for a tramp through the tree-ferns and scrub, where you can camp at the top of a hill, watch the sun rising over the plains beyond in the morning, and listen to the bellbirds during your breakfast.



No. 1—Easily-made Canvas Bag.

Boys who are thinking of camping in the bush or mountains this summer will realise the advantage of acquiring a few tips about equipment.

Those who, not content with stationary camp life, wish to make small exploration trips to other hills and gullies, off the beaten track, need to equip themselves in such a way that they can do a good deal of walking without being overburdened with supplies.

To enjoy such a holiday you must "travel light." Therefore you must pay attention to the proper distribution of the equipment.

First, consider the best way to carry the food, which should be in a canvas bag, easily made, as shown in illustration No. 1. Into this can be packed the sandwiches, so that flies and ants cannot get access to them. Several

Schoolboy Golfers

According to recent cable messages from Great Britain, fine performances have been achieved on the English golf links by boys. What they have accomplished serves to prove that golf is a game in which boys may easily excel.

Australia has the makings of a future golf champion in L. Nettieford, a Hobart schoolboy of 15 years, who made a name for himself in the recent Open Golf Championship Meeting at Sandraurham, Victoria. He shaped so well in one of the competitions that he was only beaten by a very narrow margin by Hector Morrison, a former Open Champion of Australia. In several other events he played remarkably good golf.

In conversation with a representative of "Pals," the Hobart schoolboy said that he had begun to play the game less than two years ago. His father was an enthusiast, he said, and the boy used to amuse himself swinging his father's clubs. That was how he became a golfer. Naturally he considers that golf is a capital pastime for boys, and one in which they are certain to do well after consistent practice on the links.

An Open Aquarium

A reader of "Pals," who resides in Warburton (Vic.), writes that he is starting an open aquarium in a creek there, and asks for advice. Several other Pals have written for information on the same subject.

If the creek were enlarged, the chances are that the first flood would fill the hole with sand and mud, while such fish as carp, trench and English perch would escape. The best fish for the pool would be our native minnow (Galaxias), and the blackfish (Gadopsus). Most of these would remain in the pond despite floods, if they had plenty of cover among rocks or snags. It would not be advisable to place newts in an open pool, as suggested by one writer. If this were done, it is likely that they would wander away, either up or down stream.

The minnow is an ideal aquarium fish, as it is both hardy and active. Moreover, it rises readily to the surface for food. If a boy wishes to start an open aquarium he cannot do better than begin with the minnow. Unfortunately, like most of our native fresh-

water fishes, it is rapidly diminishing, before the introduced fish, which makes its protection all the more desirable.

Public School Records

Andrew H. Young, St. Peter's, Adelaide, writes:

In "Pals" of September 15, under the heading of "Fine Public School Record," appears a reference to Sydney Grammar School. I wish that you would publish some of the records of our old college, St. Peter's, Adelaide.

Like Sydney Grammar, it has reached a high standard scholastically. It holds the challenge shields for cricket, tennis and athletics. Of our old scholars, 1,116 served in the Great War, and 81 in the South African war. No fewer than 152 made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War. The military distinctions gained numbered 137, including one Victoria Cross, 11 D.S.O.'s, while 44 Military Crosses, with five bars were gained. Military Medals were won by 22 of our old boys, one carrying a bar. More than 600 scholars are now attending St. Peter's, which was founded in 1847.

Attacked in the Night

:: By Duke Ferguson ::

A Story of the Far North

"All right at the back? Well, so long, everybody."

Jack Maguire's whip crackled in the air, and the two somewhat jaded looking horses straightened up and moved off. In a few minutes the hooded buckboard was almost out of sight in the long grass and undeveloped bush that fringed the river.

Long after her husband had passed out of sight, Mrs Maguire stood at the door and watched the spot whence they had disappeared. She had a queer little misgiving for which she could not account.

Jack Maguire, aged fourteen, standing by his mother's side with his little sister Mary, noticed the passing shadow of anxiety on his mother's face.

"What's wrong, mother?" he asked quickly.

"Wrong?" exclaimed Mrs Maguire with a start. "Nothing is wrong, Jack. What makes you ask?"

"Just your face, mother," replied the boy, looking hard and earnestly at his mother.

Mrs Maguire laughed. "Oh, it's my face, is it, Jack? Then I will have to get rid of it." She spoke with forced cheerfulness.

The Northern Territory winter, with its warm days and clear, cold nights, was well begun. It was, therefore, not an unpleasant journey that Mr Maguire had undertaken. But why, Mrs Maguire asked herself, had he chosen to start almost at nightfall?

He had only to journey to the Kath-rine river, 25 miles away.

True, he had expressed a desire to return home tomorrow night. But why the hurry?

Suddenly there flashed across Mrs Maguire's mind a possible explanation. Her husband had remarked at lunch time that he had met Old Jake, the stockman, when out rounding up some missing cattle that morning. Jake had lost a hand, which had been replaced by a metal hook, but despite his loss, he was famous for his dexterity in saddling and harnessing horses, and as a rider. What had Jake told Mr Maguire?

Mrs Maguire dropped her sewing, and paced the floor nervously. Then chiding herself for giving way to "such fancies," she resolved to go to bed, and rose to carry out her determination, when her ear caught a faint sound, a sound that made her halt sharply in the middle of the floor. For a fraction of a second her heart ceased to beat.

There was no mistaking that sound of the distant galloping of hoofs. It was coming nearer. The horseman was making straight for the little home-stead, and galloping as if for his life.

Mrs Maguire felt that she wanted to scream. But she was a brave woman. So, summoning all her courage, she went to the door, and flinging it wide open, looked out into the darkness, the candle in her hand.

Guided by the candle-light, the horseman straightened his course, and rode direct for the house. Mrs Maguire felt that she could almost have fainted

with relief when the cheerful voice of Old Jake himself rang out through the night. "It's only me, Mrs Maguire!"

She ran out with the candle, and, peering into Old Jake's face, asked: "Jake? Is he all right?"

"All right when I last saw him," remarked Old Jake with a cheerful grin. "I guess he's at the settlement by now, or pretty near to it."

"Stable your horse, Jake, and come in. I am so anxious tonight."

Jake led his horse to the stable, where, with the assistance of Kum Wun, one of the Chinese hands on the station, he quickly made it comfortable for the night. Then he joined Mrs Maguire in the house.

There was not much to tell. A small party of blacks, headed by Ebola, an aborigine with an evil reputation, and including Leo Fang, a vicious half-breed Chinaman, was in the district, Jake said. The fact that the nomads had left their guns and families behind somewhere was sinister. They appeared two days earlier, to be making for The Settlement, but suddenly they had taken an easterly course, in the direction of Powell's, a station about 15 miles away. Up to the present they appeared to have done no appreciable harm, but settlers could not be expected to feel easy with such a tribe in the district.

He had mentioned the matter to Mr Maguire, who had said that he would shorten his intended business visit to The Settlement, and that while there he would hire a couple of able-bodied men for a week or two until the danger was past.

"So that, Mrs Maguire," concluded Jake, "is the position."

"What have you discovered today, Jake?" inquired Mrs Maguire.

The old stockman grimaced. "Oh, well, if you must have it, you must," he said. "The fact is, Mrs Maguire, I've been to Powell's today."

"Was anybody — was anybody killed?" ventured Mrs Maguire a little nervously.

"Well, now you come to mention it, Mrs Maguire, there was a Chinaman there that met with an accident — a station hand."

"And you think, Jake, the blacks are making this way?" Mrs Maguire's tone was composed.

"Yes, they are coming this way, Mrs Maguire, and unless I'm mistaken they're close handy now; not more'n a mile away at the most at this moment."

"You are risking your life, Jake, to save me and my little ones."

"Well," stammered Jake, "if you'd call it a risk. But, come now, Mrs Maguire," he added, "we'd better be shutting up."

In a few minutes the windows were barricaded with mattresses and any other material that would help to make resistance to bullets. Jake said he was not sure that the blacks were armed, but he had a notion that Leo Fang would have a stolen gun in his possession. Anyway, it was wise not to take risks.

When everything was in readiness, Jake silently let himself out of the house, Mrs Maguire bolting the door behind him. Jake explained that he would be able to make a better de-



Then, with the single word "Go!" he flung open the stable door.

fence from the stable, as from there he could cover, with his Winchester, the line of approach to the house from at least three angles. In reality the stockman had determined to draw upon himself in the stable the fire from any guns that the blacks might have in their possession.

The hours of the night passed slowly, and in deathly silence, Mrs. Maguire, with beating heart, listened for every sound that would indicate the approach of the blacks or the opening of the expected attack.

At last it came—a sharp report from the direction of the stable. Simultaneously there was a yell—so close to the rear window that both Mrs. Maguire and her son Jack sprang to their feet.

The startling interruption was followed by a stillness almost as startling. Whoever was injured, gave no further indication of the result of the old stockman's aim.

Half an hour passed. Then through the night air came another report, out upon the fields, and the sound of a third as the bullet struck and buried itself in the timber of the stables.

Mrs. Maguire shivered. The blacks, then, had at least one gun. Evidently they possessed two guns, at least. Immediately there came from another direction the sound of a second shot. The bullet, apparently, went wide of its mark.

During the hours that remained to the coming of the dawn the little party in the house lived through silent agonies of fear and hope. Shot after shot rang out in the night. Little Mary, awakened by the sounds of the firing, cried, but was soothed to sleep again. At length, when it wanted just an hour to the dawn, there came a faint tapping at the rear door, and a whispered instruction from Jake was heard to open quickly, but without noise.

Mrs. Maguire opened the door softly and Jake crawled in. As quickly the door was closed again and secured.

The stockman said that he had been shot in the arm—the "gummy arm," he added with a chuckle. He was "weakening a bit from loss of blood."

Mrs. Maguire gave a subdued cry. "Now, now, don't worry!" urged the stockman, soothingly. "It's nothing much. A chance shot—one of Leo Fang's I expect. I'll even things with him yet. But we'll have to change our plans a bit, Mrs. Maguire."

"Tell me what you wish me to do, Jake."

Jake unfolded his plan. He couldn't trust the Chinese hands. Young Jack would have to ride to The Settlement, and summon immediate relief.

The boy's heart gave a great bound. Without a word, he kissed his mother and sister, and dropping to his knees, crawled after Jake through the open door and along the ground to the stables. It was long arduous work, and they were working against time—the dawn.

They reached the stables. Jake silently lifted Jack on to the ^{back} saddle back of his horse. Speaking softly to the animal, the stockman led it, very gently, to the stable door. Then, with the single word, "Gid!" he flung open the stable door, and gave the horse a resounding smack with his hand.

The horse needed no further education as to his mission. With a rush and a bound he cleared the low, rough fencing around the little homestead, and stood along the track to the nearest hill top that lay in the line of route to the settlement.

The blacks were taken completely by surprise. With wild yells they fled

in all directions, and swept vainly towards the fleeing horse and its crouching rider. Only one of the party did not run—Leo Fang. The brain of a Chinaman—even of a half-bred Chinaman—is a better working instrument than the brain of an aborigine.

Leo Fang grasped his gun, and levelled it. The dawn was just breaking, and the outline of his bank figure and extended arm was silhouetted against the skyline. In another moment, if Leo Fang only aimed straight, the horse or its rider, or both, would be levelled to the earth.

But Leo Fang did not fire, straight or crooked. Even as his figure rose in the dawn, the Winchester of the stockman, crouching in the shadow of the stable, was shored along the mutilated arm, which coiled around the stock. Simultaneously the stockman's unmarred hand found its way to the trigger, and Leo Fang was just sighting his quarry along the barrel of his gun when the stockman's Winchester spat—once.

The story of young Jack's twenty-five mile ride to The Settlement is one of the famous stories of the Far North. Hardly less famous is the story of how every man that happened to be in The Settlement when Young Jack arrived with his summons for help was thrust into service, and made to run the race of its life to the Maguire's. The mis-

sion pastor's gig and pair were commandeered by visiting miners fresh from the adjacent tin fields, and was driven with reckless haste until its frail framework collapsed.

When the vanguard of the rescue party arrived, it found old Jake quietly sitting on the Maguire's doorstep, smoking his pipe, his arm well and carefully bandaged.

"The blacks heard the noise you made leaving The Settlement," remarked Jake, with ironical playfulness, as the first of the rescue party alighted.

The rescue party, however, was in no mood for joking, and, led by Mr. Maguire, it searched the countryside for the blacks. But the native cunning and ground craft, which had detected the coming of the horsemen half an hour before they actually arrived, was equal to the task of eluding pursuit. The rescuers returned empty handed.

After having disposed of the body of Leo Fang, the party returned to the little homestead, where they enjoyed the hospitality of Mrs. Maguire, and learned the particulars of the overnight happenings.

Between Old Jake and Mr. Maguire little was said. But there was a wealth of meaning in their handshake, and a wealth of admiration in their glances at young Jack, the hero of the thrilling night ride.

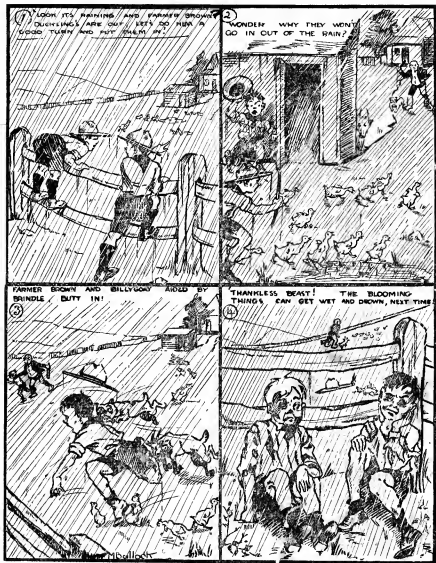


Reassurance

Mr. Heavyweight: "You're a very little chap to be running a lift, aren't you?"

Left Boy: "Yeh. They had to gimme the job 'cause the rope broke so often wiv the 'avier blokes."

THE CUBS TAKE TO SCOUT RULES LIKE A DUCK TAKES TO WATER



BUT FIND THAT MEN ARE APT TO BE UNGRATEFUL